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Aruba TODAY

On Top Of The News Email: news@arubatoday.com website: www.arubatoday.com Tel: +297 582-7800 Monday, August 22, 2011

Pentagon Adapting

ROBERT BURNS,
AP National Security Writer
WASHINGTON (AP) — The Sept. 11 attacks transformed the Pentagon, ravaging the iconic building itself and setting the stage for two long and costly wars that reordered the way the American military fights. Compared with a decade ago, the military is bigger, more closely connected to the CIA, more practiced at taking on terrorists and more respected by the American public. But its members also are growing weary from war, committing suicide at an alarming rate and training less for conventional warfare. The partly gutted Pentagon was restored with remarkable speed after the hijacked American Airlines Boeing 757 slammed through its west side, setting the building ablaze and killing 184 people. But recovering from the strain of fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan will take far longer — possibly decades. The Pentagon's leaders will have to adjust to a new era of austerity after a decade in which the defense budget doubled, to nearly \$700 billion this year. The Army and Marine Corps in particular — both still heavily engaged in Afghanistan — will struggle to retrain, rearm and reinvigorate their badly stretched forces even as budgets begin to shrink.

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Tripoli Under Siege



Rebels celebrate their entrance into Tripoli at the Gargaresh Bridge, inside the city, in Libya, Aug. 21, 2011. Rebels surged into the Libyan capital Sunday night, meeting only sporadic resistance from troops loyal to Col. Moammar Gadhafi and setting off raucous street celebrations by residents hailing what appears to be the end of his 42 years in power.

(Bryan Denton/The New York Times)

BEN HUBBARD
KARIN LAUB
Associated Press

TRIPOLI, Libya (AP) — Libyan rebels raced into Tripoli in a lightning advance Sunday that met little resistance as Moammar Gadhafi's defenders melted away and his 40-year rule appeared to rapidly crumble. The euphoric fighters celebrated with residents of the capital in the city's main square, the symbolic heart of the

regime. Opposition fighters captured Gadhafi's son and one-time heir apparent, Seif al-Islam. The prosecutor at the International Criminal Court in the Netherlands said he would contact the rebels to discuss his handover for trial on charges of crimes against humanity. Associated Press reporters with the rebels said the fighters easily advanced 20 miles on Sunday

from the west, took town after town — welcomed by residents — overwhelmed a major military base, then swept into the capital in a stunning turning of the tide in the 6-month-old Libyan civil war. The fighters and Tripoli residents who support them flooded Green Square, shooting in the air in celebration, clapping and waving the rebels' tri-color flag, according to television footage of the scene.

Some set fire to the green flag of Gadhafi's regime and shot holes in a poster with his image. "Now we don't call it the Green Square, but we call it the Martyrs Square," said Nour Eddin Shatouni, a 50-year-old engineer who was among the residents who flowed out of their homes to join the celebrations.

Continued on Page 2

Rebels advance into Tripoli, Gadhafi defenses collapse

Continued from Front

"We were waiting for the signal and it happened. All mosques chanted 'God is great' all at once. We smelled a good scent, it is the smell of victory. We know it is the time."

Green Square holds profound symbolic value. The regime has held pro-Gadhafi rallies there nearly every night since the revolt began in February, and the historic Red Fort that overlooks the square is a favorite scenic spot for the Libyan leader to deliver speeches to his loyalists.

Thousands of Libyans also celebrated in the streets of Benghazi, the rebels' de facto capital in the east. Firing guns into the air and shooting fireworks, they cheered and waved the rebel tricolor flags, dancing and singing in the city's main square.

Gadhafi's whereabouts Sunday were unknown. But he delivered a series of angry and defiant audio messages broadcast on state television, calling on his supporters to march in the streets of the capital and "purify it" from "the rats." He was not shown in the

messages.

His defiance raised the possibility of a last-ditch fight over the capital, home to 2 million people. Government spokesman Moussa Ibrahim claimed the regime has "thousands and thousands of fighters" and vowed: "We will fight. We

The rebels' way into Tripoli was opened when the military unit in charge of protecting Gadhafi and the capital surrendered, ordering his troops to drop their weapons, the rebel information minister Mahmoud Shammam said.

In a sign of the coordina-

tion for Tripoli residents who join the rebellion, said Munir Ramzi of the rebels' military council in Misrata.

The rebels' speedy leap forward over just a few dramatic hours was a stunning reversal for Gadhafi, who earlier this month had seemed to have a firm grip on his stronghold in the western part of Libya, despite months of NATO airstrikes on his military. Rebels had been unable to make any advances for weeks, bogged down on the main fronts with regime troops in the east and center of the country.

NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen said Gadhafi's regime was "clearly crumbling" and that the time to create a new democratic Libya has arrived.

The sooner Gadhafi "realizes that he cannot win the battle against his own people, the better," he said in a statement, adding that NATO will continue to strike his troops if they make "any threatening moves toward the Libyan people."

Gadhafi is the Arab world's longest-ruling, most erratic, most grimly fascinating leader — presiding for 42

years over this North African desert republic with vast oil reserves and just 6 million people.

For years, he was an international pariah blamed for the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jumbo jet over Lockerbie, Scotland, that killed 270 people.

After years of denial, Gadhafi's Libya acknowledged responsibility, agreed to pay up to \$10 million to relatives of each victim, and declared he would dismantle all weapons of mass destruction.

That eased him back into the international community.

But on February 22, days after the uprising against him began, Gadhafi gave a televised speech amid violent social unrest against his autocratic rule. In the speech, he vowed to hunt down protesters "inch by inch, room by room, home by home, alleyway by alleyway." The speech caused a furor that fueled the armed rebellion against him and it has been since mocked in songs and spoofs across the Arab world.

The rebel force that moved toward Tripoli Sunday, taking town after town, was greeted by thousands of jubilant civilians who rushed out of their homes to cheer the long convoys of pickup trucks packed with fighters shooting in the air.

One man grabbed a rebel flag that had been draped over the hood of a slow-moving car and kissed it, overcome with emotion.

Some of the fighters were hoarse, shouting: "We are coming for you, frizz-head," a mocking nickname for Gadhafi. In villages, mosque loudspeakers blared "Allahu Akbar," or "God is great."

"We are going to sacrifice our lives for freedom," said Nabil al-Ghowail, a 30-year-old dentist holding a rifle in the streets of Janzour, a suburb just six miles west of Tripoli. Heavy gunfire erupted nearby.

Once they reached Tripoli, the rebels took control of one neighborhood, Ghot Shaal, on the western edge of the city. □



Journalists wearing protective equipment gather on the balcony overlooking the main lobby of the Rixos hotel in Tripoli, Libya, Sunday, Aug. 21, 2011. Gunfire erupted all around the hotel as rebels raced into Tripoli in a lightning advance Sunday that met little resistance as Moammar Gadhafi's defenders melted away and his 40-year rule appeared to rapidly crumble.

(AP Photo/Dario Lopez-Mills)

have whole cities on our sides.

They are coming en masse to protect Tripoli to join the fight."

But it appeared that key parts of Gadhafi's military were peeling away.

tion among rebels, as the main force moved into the city from the west, a second force of 200 opposition fighters from the city of Misrata further east landed by boat in the capital, bringing weapons and ammuni-

Scarred by 9/11, Pentagon adapts to new fight

Continued from Front

And the troops themselves face an uncertain future; many are scarred by the mental strains of battle, and some face transition to civilian life at a time of economic turmoil and high unemployment. The cost of veterans' care will march higher. As Robert Gates put it shortly before he stepped down as defense secretary this summer, peace will bring its own problems. The problem was not peace on Sept. 11, 2001. At the time, the military was focused almost entirely on external threats. Air defenses kept watch for planes and missiles that might strike from afar; there was little attention to the possibility that terrorists might hijack domestic airliners and use them as missiles. That changed with the

creation of U.S. Northern Command in 2002, which now shares responsibility for defending U.S. territory with the Homeland Security Department.

Terrorism was not a new challenge in 2001, but the scale of the Sept. 11 attacks prompted a shift in the U.S. mindset from defense to offense.

The U.S. invaded Afghanistan on Oct. 7 in an unconventional military campaign that was coordinated with the CIA. That heralded one of the most profound effects of Sept. 11: a shift in the military's emphasis from fighting conventional army-on-army battles to executing more secretive, intelligence-driven hunts for shadowy terrorists. That shift was important, but it came gradually as the military services clung to their Cold War ways.



This undated aerial photo provided by the FBI shows damage caused by a hijacked airliner that crashed into the Pentagon in Washington on Sept. 11, 2001.

(AP Photo/FBI)

Still in debate is how the Taliban, which had shielded Osama bin Laden and other al-Qaida figures prior to the U.S. invasion and was driven from Kabul within weeks, managed to make a comeback in the years

after the U.S. shifted its main focus to Iraq in 2003. That setback in Afghanistan, coupled with the longer-than-expected fight in Iraq, showed the limits of post-Sept. 11 U.S. military power. □

The New York Times

International Weekly

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Groundbreaking starts
September 1, 2011

Empire State Building, New York City, NY

Reuniting tornado victims with treasured photos

SHARON COHEN

AP National Writer

CARTHAGE, Missouri (AP)

— White-gloved workers line the long tables, carefully sifting through photos of proms and weddings, baby's first day, proud soldiers in their uniforms. They gently clean off any dirt, dry rain-damaged pictures — and salvage a city's lost treasures.

The history of Joplin, Missouri is slowly coming into focus here, one snapshot, one portrait at a time. A church room in this nearby town has been converted into collection central for more than 27,000 photos buried or blown away in the monster May tornado that left 160 dead and obliterated a third of Joplin. Amazingly, even as 200 mph (322 kph) winds reduced homes to splinters, fragile photos survived. Even more incredible was where some turned up: Trees. Barns. Barbed wire fences. In Oklahoma, Arkansas, Kansas, Tennessee. And, of course, all across Missouri.

Days after the May 22 storm, Angela Walters, a genealogist in Oklahoma, noticed some of these photos on Facebook pages. Many listed bare-bones information: streets where the pictures were found, a contact phone

number. Why not put all of them in one place, Walters thought, so their owners could find them? So many people had lost so much, surely they'd cherish any trace of their past.

"When a disaster happens, as soon as you hear a fam-

Walters created a Facebook page — the Lost Photos of Joplin — to post pictures found in the storm-ravaged city and far beyond. She joined forces with a similar local project, and the First Baptist Church in Carthage stepped up to

about 1,000 a week. (DVDs, letters and other personal mementoes also are being returned.)

"We're trying to let people know there's a community here that wants to preserve their memories ... help them move forward and assure

bathroom tiles. So finding a photo of her son, Scott, on the Facebook page "was like claiming a victory from the tornado," she says.

"Every day you realize everything you had is gone," Lowe explains. "You think, 'I don't have this or that.' Then to get one part of your life back — it's overwhelming. You just cry."

The battered, orange-tinted picture shows Scott, then 2 (he's now 8) mugging for the camera in the bathroom, pretending to be shaving with foam on his chin.

"It's a day and a memory and a piece of time," she says of the photo. "That's all I have now. I don't have a baby blanket. I don't have his first little outfit he came home in. I don't want you to think I'm a pack rat, but it's honestly something that takes me back to happier times. ... Since the tornado, they've been few and far between."

Holly Wilson found comfort, too, in a photo, after losing her grandmother in the tornado. The elderly woman suffered a fatal heart attack while trying to ride out the storm huddled in a closet with her daughter (Wilson's mother) and another family member.

Wilson turned to the Facebook page, searching for familiar faces. "I thought maybe if I look every second of every day, I can find a little piece of hope," she says. □



Glenn and Margaret Hagenbaumer, volunteers at the First Baptist Church in Carthage, Mo., clean and sort photos and other personal documents found among rubble after a powerful EF-5 tornado destroyed a large swath of nearby Joplin, Mo., on May 22, 2011. The church has taken on the task of preserving thousands of lost photos and reuniting them with their owners.

(AP Photo/Charlie Riedel)

ily is safe, the next thing you always think about is photos," she says. "They're irreplaceable. We can go back to the time and place and people we don't have in front of us anymore. They're the record of our lives."

help. Volunteers at the church — about a dozen miles from Joplin — clean and dry each photo. They record anything written on the images, then number, scan and send them to Walters. She plans to post

them everything is going to be OK," says Thad Beeler, head of the church's photo rescue team.

It's slow going. Almost 500 photos have been returned so far. For every "find," there's reason to celebrate.

Judy Lowe, a real estate agent, lost everything in the twister; all that remained of her house were

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For Weiner seat, GOP hopes for upset

MICHAEL BARBARO

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NEW YORK — Of all the places to hear fulminations against President Barack Obama, one of the least expected is the corner of 71st Avenue and Queens Boulevard, in the heart of a congressional district that propelled Democratic stalwarts like Geraldine A. Ferraro, Charles E. Schumer and Anthony D. Weiner to Washington.

But it was there that Dale Weiss, a 64-year-old Democrat, approached the Republican running for Congress in a special election and, without provocation, blasted the president for failing to tame runaway federal spending.

"We need to cut Medicaid," she declared, "but he won't do that." She shook her head in disgust. "He is a moron." After nodding approvingly for a time, the Republican candidate, Robert Turner, signaled for an assistant to cut off Weiss.

Frustration with Obama is so widespread, he explained later, that he tries to limit such rants to about 30 seconds, or else they will consume most of his day.

"It's endemic in the district," Turner said. "You can't stop them once they get started."

The Sept. 13 election in the 9th Congressional District, which became vacant this summer when Weiner resigned over an online sex scandal, was expected to be a sleepy sideshow — a procedural formality that would install David I. Weprin, a Democratic state assemblyman and heir to a Queens political dynasty, into a seat known for its deep blue hue.

Instead, the election has become something far more unsettling to Democrats: a referendum on the president and his party that is highlighting the surprisingly raw emotions of the electorate.

A Siena College poll conducted early this month showed Weprin leading by only 6 percentage points. That has alarmed national Democrats, who privately fret that even a close outcome in a working-class swath of Brooklyn and Queens may foreshadow broader troubles for the party in 2012.

Suddenly Weprin's aides have ramped up fund-raising, enlisting big-name figures like Sen. Joseph I. Lieberman to headline events. The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee has dispatched operatives to advise the candidate. And the campaign, aided by big city unions, is drawing up an extensive field operation to turn out the vote.

Few predict a Republican upset: registered Democrats outnumber Republicans by three to one in the district. But the district is not uniformly liberal — many Orthodox Jews live there, for example — and even those closest to Weprin grudgingly describe the contest as uncomfortably competitive.

On paper, Weprin seems like a sturdy candidate; he is the former chairman of the City Council's Finance Committee and the son of an state Assembly speaker. His message seems tailor-made for the district: he promises to protect Medicare and raise taxes on the super-rich.

But the election, waged with little news media attention, offers scant time to remind voters of his biography. And after a long summer of stock market gyrations and battles over the federal debt, voters seem determined to register their frustrations with Washington.

"The issue defining this race," said Robert Zimmerman, a member of the Democratic National Committee from New York, "is the confidence that the electorate has in this district about the national Democratic agenda."

Turner, a retired cable television executive running as a business-minded opponent of deficit spending, acknowledges that uneasiness over Obama could prove decisive. Asked about his strength in the poll, he smiled mischievously.

"Suddenly," Turner said of voters, "they are faced with the most brilliant, dynamic, charismatic, Scott Brownesque candidate." □

Social Security disability on verge of insolvency

S. OHLEMACHER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Laid-off workers and aging baby boomers are flooding So-

cial Security's disability system by real-locating money from the retirement program, just as lawmakers did in 1994.

That would provide only

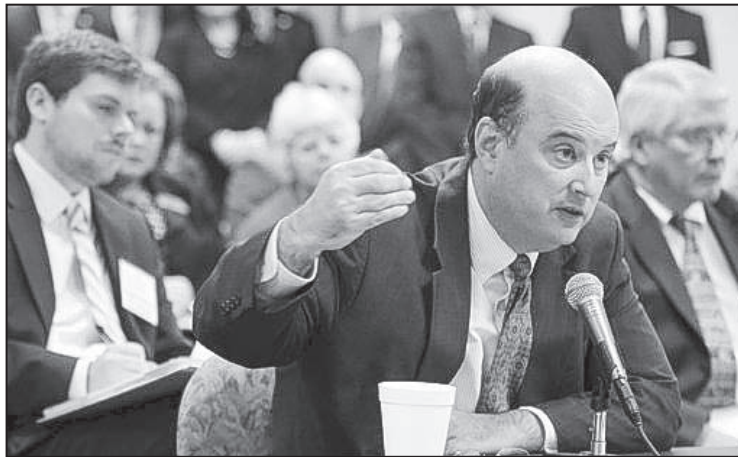
short-term relief at the expense of weakening the retirement program.

Claims for disability benefits typically increase in a bad economy because many disabled people get laid off and can't find a new job.

This year, about 3.3 million people are expected to apply for federal disability benefits.

That's 700,000 more than in 2008 and 1 million more than a decade ago.

"It's primarily economic desperation," Social Security Commissioner Michael Astrue said in an interview. "People on the margins who get bad news in terms of a layoff and have no other place to go and they take a shot at disability." □



Social Security Commissioner Michael Astrue responds to questions at a hearing in Akron, Ohio. A Senate oversight committee told Astrue the agency hasn't done enough to trim its disability claims backlog. Applications are up nearly 50 percent over a decade ago as people with disabilities lose their jobs and can't find new ones in an economy that has shed nearly 7 million jobs. Many wait two years or more before their cases are resolved.

(AP Photo/Tony Dejak, File)

cial Security's disability program with benefit claims, pushing the financially strapped system toward the brink of insolvency.

Applications are up nearly 50 percent over a decade ago as people with disabilities lose their jobs and can't find new ones in an economy that has shed nearly 7 million jobs.

The stampede for benefits is adding to a growing backlog of applicants — many wait two years or more before their cases are resolved — and worsening the financial problems of a program that's been running in the red for years.

New congressional estimates say the trust fund that supports Social Security disability will run out of money by 2017, leaving the program unable to pay full benefits, unless Congress acts.

About two decades later, Social Security's much larger retirement fund is projected to run dry as well.

Much of the focus in Washington has been on fixing Social Security's retirement system. Proposals range from raising the retirement age to means-testing benefits for wealthy retirees. But the disability system is in much worse shape and its problems defy easy solutions.

The trustees who oversee Social Security are urging Congress to shore up the

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GOP may OK tax increase that Obama hopes to block

CHARLES BABINGTON
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —Congressional Republicans want to raise your taxes. Impossible, right? GOP lawmakers are so virulently anti-tax, surely they will fight to prevent a payroll tax increase on virtually every wage-earner starting Jan. 1, right?

Apparently not.

Many of the same Republicans who fought hammer-and-tong to keep the George W. Bush-era income tax cuts from expiring on schedule are now saying a different "temporary" tax cut should end as planned. By their own definition, that amounts to a tax increase.

The tax break extension they oppose is sought by President Barack Obama.

Unlike proposed changes in the income tax, this policy helps the 46 percent of



President Barack Obama speaks in the Rose Garden of the White House in Washington. Many of the same Republicans who fought President Barack Obama to keep the George W. Bush-era income tax cuts from expiring on schedule are now saying a different "temporary" tax cut should end as planned. (AP Photo/Susan Walsh, File)

all Americans who owe no federal income taxes but who pay a "payroll tax" on practically every dime they earn.

There are other differences as well, and Republicans say their stand is consistent with their goal of long-term tax policies that will spur employment and lend greater certainty to the economy.

"It's always a net positive to let taxpayers keep more of what they earn," says Rep. Jeb Hensarling, "but not all tax relief is created equal for the purposes of helping to get the economy moving again."

The Texas lawmaker is on the House GOP leadership team. The debate is likely to boil up in coming weeks as a special bipartisan committee seeks big deficit re-

ductions and weighs which tax cuts are sacrosanct.

At issue is a tax that the vast majority of workers pay, but many don't recognize because they don't read, or don't understand their pay stubs. Workers normally pay 6.2 percent of their wages toward a tax designated for Social Security.

Their employer pays an equal amount, for a total of 12.4 percent per worker.

As part of a bipartisan spending deal last December, Congress approved Obama's request to reduce the workers' share to 4.2 percent for one year; employers' rate did not change. Obama wants Congress to extend the reduction for an additional year. If not, the rate will return to 6.2 percent on Jan. 1. □

Vigil held for 4 teens killed in New Jersey

RUSS BUETTNER

© 2011 New York Times

A candlelight vigil was held this weekend for the four football players from a southern New Jersey high school who were killed in a crash on the Garden State Parkway on Saturday morning. Eight boys, all players for Mainland Regional High School in Linwood, N.J., had left a football practice and were heading south on the parkway in a 2002 Ford Explorer, said Sgt. Julian Castellanos, a spokesman for the New Jersey State Police. Just before Exit 38a, which leads to the Atlantic City Expressway, they came over a hill and encountered a sudden traffic backup, Castellanos said. "They attempted to brake, the driver lost directional control, and that caused him to roll over a couple times," he said. Two of the boys were thrown from the Explorer, with one striking another vehicle. Three of the teenagers were pronounced dead at the scene. A fourth died later at AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center's Atlantic City campus.

The four who died are: Edgar Bozzi 16, of Somers Point; Nicholas Conner, 16, of Northfield; Dean Khoury, 15, of Linwood; and Casey Brenner, 17, of Northfield, who was driving the vehicle. The other four passengers were taken to the same hospital, but their injuries are not considered life threatening, Castellanos said. □

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Preaching health in the heartland of fried food

CAMPBELL ROBERTSON
© 2011 New York Times

HERNANDO, Miss. — Not much seems out of place in the Mississippi Delta, where everything appears to be as it always has been, only more so as the years go by. But here in the fellowship hall of a little Baptist church on a country road is an astonishing sight: a plate of fresh fruit.

"You get used to it," said Arelia Robertson, who has been attending the church for almost eight decades. Despite a dirge of grim health statistics, an epidemic of diabetes and heart disease and campaigns by health agencies and organizations, the Delta diet, a heavenly smorgasbord of things fried, salted and boiled with pork, has per-



A man fills his plate at the buffet at the Dining Room in Marks, Miss., Aug. 14, 2011. The National Baptist Convention, which represents some seven million people in nearly 10,000 churches, is supporting a campaign that aims to have a "health ambassador" in every member church by September 2012.
(William Widmer/The New York Times)

sisted.

It has persisted because it tastes good, but also because it has been passed down through generations

and sustained through such cultural mainstays as the church fellowship dinner. But if the church helped get everybody into this mess,

it may be the church that helps get everybody out. For over a decade from his pulpit here at Oak Hill Baptist in North Mississippi, the Rev. Michael O. Minor has waged war against obesity and bad health. In the Delta this may seem akin to waging war against humidity, but Minor has the air of the salesman he once was, and the animated persistence to match.

Years into his war, he is beginning to claim victories. The National Baptist Convention, which represents some 7 million people in nearly 10,000 churches, is ramping up a far-reaching health campaign devised by Minor, which aims to have a "health ambassador" in every member church by September 2012. The goals of the program, the most ambitious of its kind, will be demanding but concrete, said the Rev. George W. Waddles Sr., the president of the convention's Congress of Christian Education.

The signs of change in the Delta may be most noticeable because they are the

most hard-fought.

A sign in the kitchen of First Baptist Church in Clarksdale declares it a "No Fry Zone." Bel Mount Missionary Baptist Church in the sleepy hamlet of Marks just had its first Taste Test Sunday, where the women of the church put out a spread of healthier foods, like sugar-free apple pie, to convince members that healthy cuisine does not have to taste like old tires.

Carved out of the fields behind Seek Well Baptist Church in the tiny town of Lula is a new community garden. The pastor, the Rev. Kevin Wiley, is even thinking about becoming a vegetarian, a sort of person he says he has never met in the Delta.

Many pastors tell the same story: They started worrying about their own health, but were motivated to push their congregations by the campaign that began in Minor's church.

"I'm not going to say it has to be done by the church," Wiley said. "But it has to be done by people within the community." □

Social media helps find U.S. student

JOHN C. FREED
© 2011 New York Times

It is every parent's nightmare: a normally reliable child sets off on a journey, then vanishes without a trace. But through the power of social media, a small army of thousands of volunteers produced a happy ending in the case of Jacob Boehm. Boehm, 22, a senior at Stanford University, had gone to Japan in June with the Stanford Chamber Chorale. When the rest of the singers headed home, he continued to travel, carrying his U.S. and German passports. Like most of his peers at elite universities, he was well plugged in to the world around him, posting regular updates every two to three days on his travels through Southeast Asia. By Aug. 13, he had announced through his Google + page that he was in Malaysia.

Then nothing for a week. Worried, his parents, Bruce Boehm and Nancy Lubertoff, got in touch with U.S. and German consular officials in Malaysia and sent emails to 12 of his friends. The message went viral. On Facebook, more than 5,000 people subscribed to one of two pages dedicated to

the hunt. On Twitter, Jacob Boehm became a trending topic in the San Francisco Bay Area, the home of Stanford.

The first Facebook page was created shortly before 11 a.m. Friday, San Francisco time, by Julian Kusanadi, a fellow member of the chorale. People immediately started joining in, offering suggestions, encouragement and prayers. One suggested reaching out to current and former Stanford students who lived in Malaysia or hailed from there. Another posted a close-up photo showing just Boehm's face. Misha Nasrollahzadeh, doing a summer internship at Facebook, contacted its "safety team," which offered to run free advertising promoting the page within Malaysia. And that was just in the first 10 minutes.

At that point, a second page, which became the main source of information, appeared. A missing person's flyer was posted in English, then translated by someone else into Malay. Celeste Brash, who writes the Lonely Planet guide for the area, noted that the village where he had last been seen, Jeran-

tut, is a gateway to Taman Negara, a jungle area that is a vast national park. "Is it possible he went on a long jungle trek?" she wrote, offering local contact information. □



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For Biden visit, China chooses safe school

EDWARD WONG

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DUJIANGYAN, China – The choice of sites for visits by foreign leaders is always the product of careful deliberations, but those calculations were particularly evident on Sunday when Vice President Joe Biden stopped at a school here. Chinese and American officials knew that whichever school was selected in Dujiangyan, in the western province of Sichuan, it had to reflect the resilience of residents in recovering from the devastating earthquake of May 12, 2008, which left more than 86,000 dead or missing.

But Chinese officials were



U.S. Vice President Joe Biden, second from left, and Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping, second from right, listen as a Chinese student speaks during their visit to the Qingchengshan High School in Dujiangyan in southwestern China's Sichuan province, Sunday, Aug. 21, 2011.

(AP Photo/Ng Han Guan, POOL)

ents with compensation money or detained those who were especially troublesome.

And so on Sunday afternoon, Biden's entourage drove up to Qingchengshan High School, set against a backdrop of green mountains wreathed in mist. The original buildings had been badly damaged during the earthquake, but no students had died, and the school was not considered one that had particularly suffered from "tofu construction," now a catch phrase among Chinese for anything poorly built.

That meant that the school was a good fit for a photo opportunity. Moreover, the NBA had helped build four basketball courts here after the earthquake, and the U.S. Agency for International Development and Cisco Systems had equipped classrooms with electronic whiteboards. Biden and Vice President Xi Jinping, presumed to be the next leader of China, chatted with dozens of students in white uniforms who were

playing basketball on the outdoor courts.

Just hours earlier, Biden had brought up the issue of human rights during a speech to 400 people at Sichuan University. "Maybe the biggest difference between us is what we refer to as human rights," he said.

"I recognize that many of you in this auditorium see our advocacy of human rights as at best an intrusion and at worst an assault on your sovereignty," he added. But the American stand, he said, was rooted in an abiding sense of morality.

Biden's words, though coming from a man of power, do not resonate as much across China as the memory of the victims of the collapsed schools – an official estimate said 5,335 students had died – and of the suppression by the government of the voices of the grieving parents and their demands for justice. Critics say the crackdown by the government was one of the worst abuses of human rights in recent years. □

no doubt careful to steer Biden away from any school that would evoke memories of the thousands of students killed when classrooms collapsed, spurring angry, grieving parents to press the government for investigations into what they suspected was shoddy construction. The government bought the silence of many par-

Trucks, camper vans and SUVs in Australian protest

ROD McGUIRK
Associated Press
CANBERRA, Australia (AP)

— Trucks, camper vans and SUVs festooned with anti-government banners and with horns blaring drove around Australia's Parliament House on Monday in a protest calling for new elections.

Police provided escorts to minimize disruption to Canberra's early morning traffic as 170 vehicles drove

through the center of the national capital in two convoys past the Parliament and Prime Minister Julia Gillard's nearby official residence.

Organizers of the so-called Convoy of No-Confidence had hoped that up to 9,000 people from around Australia would take part. Some had traveled in a convoy for 3,500 miles (5,700 kilometers) from Port Hedland in the northwest.

Police previously warned Canberra residents to expect traffic chaos throughout the morning. But Police Superintendent Michael Chew said only 170 vehicles turned up and caused little disruption.

The protest organized by a truck drivers' group is against a range of government policies including plans to tax major polluters for every ton of carbon gas they emit. □

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Syria's Assad: 'I am not worried' about security



Syrian President Bashar Assad smiles at the Syrian presidential palace, in Damascus, Syria. Syria's president said Sunday he was "not worried" about security in his country and warned against any foreign military intervention in a speech designed to portray confidence as the regime comes under blistering international condemnation for its crackdown on dissent.

(AP Photo/Hussein Malla)

ZEINA KARAM
Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Syria's president said Sunday he was "not worried" about security in his country and warned against any foreign military intervention in a speech designed to portray confidence as the regime comes under blistering international condemnation for its crackdown on dissent.

The remarks by Bashar Assad, who spoke during an interview with state-run television, came just days after the United States and its European allies called

for him to step down, and hours after a diplomat said Assad's regime was "scrubbing blood off the streets" ahead of a U.N. visit.

"I am not worried about the security situation right now, we can say the security situation is better," Assad said in his fourth public appearance since the revolt against his family's 40-year rule erupted in mid-March.

"It may seem dangerous, but in fact we are able to deal with it," Assad said.

In a now-familiar refrain, Assad promised imminent reforms — including parliamentary elections by February — but insisted the unrest was being driven by a foreign conspiracy, not true reform seekers.

Assad said President Barack Obama's calls for him to give up power had "no value."

The opposition rejected Assad's remarks, saying they have lost confidence in his promises of reform while his forces open fire on peaceful protesters.

Human rights groups say more than 2,000 people have been killed in the government's crackdown on protests.

The regime has unleashed tanks, snipers and pro-regime gunmen in an attempt to stamp out the uprising.

Assad warned against Libya-style military intervention, saying "any mili-



A Syrian girl shouts in support of Syrian President Bashar Assad after he gave an interview on state-run TV, in Omawiyeen Square, Damascus, Syria, Sunday, Aug. 21, 2011. Assad said Sunday his regime was in no danger of collapse and warned against any foreign military intervention in his country as the regime tries to crush a 5-month-old popular uprising.

(AP Photo/Muzaffar Salman)

tary action against Syria will bring repercussions that (the West) cannot tolerate." There have been no serious international plans to launch such an operation, in part because the opposition has said it does not want Western countries to interfere.

The 40-minute interview took place with two reporters seated around a table — a more casual atmosphere than previous appearances. It was the first time Assad agreed to take any questions about the events of the past five months, although the state-owned network is a mouth-

piece for the regime. The reporters did not ask any direct questions about the protest movement or the military operations that have taken place in Syrian cities.

The opposition said the interview was meaningless. Suheir Atassi, a prominent Syria pro-democracy activist who lives in hiding, posted on Twitter that Assad had given an "empty media appearance."

Syria has come under blistering international condemnation.

Most recently, the United States and its European allies on Thursday demanded

he step down. Late Saturday, former ally Turkey called Syria's situation "unsustainable."

Assad declared to U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Wednesday that military and security operations have stopped in Syria. Despite that pledge, the government's offensive has continued, although on a smaller scale.

Activists said security forces stormed the Khaldieh district in Homs Sunday, carrying out a security raid and random arrests. They said the military also stormed districts in the northern Idlib province. □

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North Korean leader Kim Jong Il visits Siberia

**CHOE SANG-HUN
MICHAEL SCHWIRTZ**

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SEOUL, South Korea — An armored train carried the North Korean leader Kim Jong Il to a hydroelectric plant in the Russian region of Siberia on Sunday, according to news reports and South Korean officials, amid signs that Kim might be seeking a lucrative role in relaying Russian energy to South Korea and Japan. Kim is making his first trip to Russia since 2002.

After raising tensions with nuclear tests and shooting

incidents with South Korea, his government has once begun reaching out again. He visited China in May and allowed his diplomats to meet with American and South Korean officials in July to discuss a resumption of talks over ending North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

The two South Korean government officials who confirmed Kim's visit to the power plant could provide no additional details.

They insisted on anonymity until either Russian or North Korean authorities make

an official announcement. As in past visits abroad, Kim, who according to reports lives in constant fear for his security, has kept the details

secret. The Kremlin released a terse statement on Saturday, only confirming his visit and the expected meeting with the Russian president,

Dmitry Medvedev.

The two are expected to meet Tuesday in the eastern Siberian city of Ulan Ude near Lake Baikal in the Buddhist region of Buryatia some 3,450 miles east of Moscow, according to the South Korean news agency Yonhap.

Kim's train traveled almost 930 miles to the small Bureya station in the Amur region in eastern Siberia on Sunday, according to news reports.

After receiving a red carpet welcome from the Russian president's envoy to the Far Eastern Region, Viktor Ishayev, and by Russian women carrying the traditional offer of a loaf of bread and salt, Kim switched to a Mercedes car for the ride to the nearby Bureiskaya hydroelectric plant.

Mutual economic and political interests bring the two leaders together, analysts in Seoul said.

Kim's efforts to pull his country out of its economic doldrums depends largely on finding a stable access to hard currency and relatively cheap energy. □



North Korean leader Kim Jong Il, right, signs in the book of honorable guests as he visits a hydro-electric power plant and its 139-meter (456-foot) dam on the Bureya River in the Amur province, eastern Siberia, Russia, Sunday, Aug. 21, 2011. Kim crossed into Russia on his armored train Saturday at the invitation of President Dmitry Medvedev, with the two leaders expected to meet later in the week to discuss the restart of nuclear disarmament talks and the construction of a pipeline that would stream Russian natural gas to North and South Korea.

(AP Photo/IA Port Amur, www.portamur.ru)

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Tribal clashes rise in South Sudan

JOSH KRON

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KAMPALA, Uganda — Tribal clashes in a region of newly independent South Sudan have killed at least 58 people in the past week, the United Nations says, raising fears of ethnic instability in the deeply impoverished country. Hundreds more are feared to have died in fighting that broke out between members of the Nuer and Murle ethnic groups in the eastern state of Jonglei, where violence between ethnic

groups has raged for years. On Thursday, members of the Murle attacked a number of villages in Uror County, burning grass-thatched huts, stealing cattle and killing or abducting local villagers known as the Lou Nuer, U.N. and local government officials said.

The United Nations said it had counted 58 bodies at two sites in the area. Fighting had subsided, but the officials said they had not been able to visit all the areas where violence had been reported. □

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Arbiters change outcome of 9 afghan elections

ROD NORDLAND
ABDUL WAFA
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KABUL, Afghanistan — Afghanistan's beleaguered election commission gave in to political pressure Sunday and declared it would change the results of the latest parliamentary elections.

The Independent Election Commission announced at a news conference Sunday that nine members of Parliament would be removed, after having ruled that the election results were final and saying that even the commission could not change the outcome. Nine candidates, previously disqualified over electoral irregularities, would have their seats restored.

"We did not willingly get involved in this case, but it was our obligation to end this crisis," the commission chairman, Fazil Ahmad Manawi, said.

The controversy over the results of September's parliamentary elections have paralyzed the Afghan government for 11 months, provoking street demonstrations by losers and counter-demonstrations by winners, and preventing President Hamid Karzai from appointing a cabinet or nominating new Supreme Court justices.

Manawi in effect acknowledged that the commission's decision was as much a political compromise as a legal solution, although he insisted the agency acted independently. □

Israel-Gaza violence threatens protest movement

ARON HELLER
Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Security has traditionally trumped all other concerns in Israel. Now some social activists fear a sudden spike of violence with the Palestinians could overwhelm a spontaneous and surprisingly strong summer-long revolt against the country's high cost of living.

A deadly ambush that killed eight Israelis, and subsequent Israeli airstrikes and rocket barrages from Gaza over the weekend, have abruptly shifted the country's attention away from the economic protests that were coalescing into a serious threat to the government.

Now the security situation is the center of attention again.

The question is whether things will ever shift back to the brief period marked by heightened awareness of social ills, but also near-giddiness over the prospect that Israel might become a "normal" country where money matters, not military needs, can take center stage.

For once the focus was high prices, not Palestinians, rockets and airstrikes. Thousands of Israeli erected protest tents in city centers and hundreds of thousands took to the streets in mass demonstrations that became a weekly Saturday night ritual this summer, sending Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu scrambling to find solutions and keep his government together.

This Saturday, however,

with cities in southern Israel under fire, organizers called off plans for a mass protest and made do with a subdued vigil of several thousand people in Tel Aviv. A



Israeli protesters sleep in a protest tent encampment against the costs of living in Israel, in Tel Aviv. Security has traditionally trumped all other concerns in Israel, leading many here to wonder whether a new round of violence with the Palestinians could spell the end of what had promised to be a defining moment, a surprisingly strong grass-roots revolt all summer against the country's high cost of living.

(AP Photo/Oded Balilty)

their tents close to bomb shelters but have no plans to go home.

The protesters will not allow the government "to say that because of this we can't make changes and that we need a budget only for security," Stern told Israel's Channel 2 TV. "We want education and health and taxes, and a fair government, and I think this is no less important."

The protests, which began after a relative lull in Israeli-Palestinian violence, initially targeted soaring housing prices, but quickly evolved into a sweeping expression of rage against a wide array of economic issues, including the cost of food, gasoline and education, the country's spending priorities and a seemingly inexorable shift to American-style capitalism. □

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City of Miami's rising tides

RUTH LA FERLA

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MIAMI BEACH, Fla. — The

skies on a recent Saturday were fickle, dense gray-yellow clouds threatening a downpour. But visitors to the Soho Beach House, an extravagantly trim and tawny contingent that might have breezed in from the set of "Entourage," were unfazed. Most were content to stay in the pool, swigging spirits from a pitcher, playing an aquatic form of ring around the rosie and studiously ignoring the wilting heat of August, a time when travelers have traditionally deserted this resort town for more hospitable shores.

"It used to be that August here was slow, reserved mostly for us locals," said Carmen Ferreira, a graphic artist, who last week dined poolside with friends at the Soho Beach House, a private club and hotel on Collins Avenue. "But that just isn't true anymore."

In Miami Beach, the once-strict delineation between high and low seasons has eroded of late. Rogue squalls and the intermittent threat of hurricanes (and a restiveness fueled by an unstable economy) have done little to stem the tide of tourists thronging restaurants, bars, hotels and shops, and crowding beaches to catch a vagrant gust of wind.

Their presence has fattened the city's coffers, driving retail sales and boosting hotel occupancy to new season-

al highs, transforming Miami Beach and its environs from a wan summer ghost town into a magnet for visitors of every stripe. "Summer here has practically caught up with winter," said Rolando Aedo, executive vice president and chief marketing

there's always a breeze on the beach." As a result, the gap between the low and high seasons has conspicuously narrowed. Deal hunters and heat seekers alike descended on Lincoln Road, the eight-block-long pedestrian street

ers toted trophy bags from modish shops like Base and AllSaints Spitalfields. Sales surged this summer at Alchemist, near Drexel Avenue, with the arrival of tourists from Brazil, where a favorable exchange rate has sent vacationers scouting

One Twelve on Ocean Drive, where diners in pale linen suits and abbreviated cocktail frocks ordered the chilled crab or the \$88 porterhouse, or nibbled fried Oreos, the restaurant's over-the-top rendition of comfort food. Attractions in this city are nearly as plentiful now as during the hectic winter months. Clubs like Mynt Lounge, Wall and Mansion continue to draw capacity crowds.

At Set, which caters mostly to youthful high rollers, guests on a recent Friday after midnight stood four deep at the bar, gyrated atop banquettes waving phallic neon-colored wands and gulped Grey Goose, contributing to the kind of frenzy more commonly witnessed in Ibiza or St.-Tropez. At any one of the string of strenuously hip hotels lining Collins Avenue, among them the Raleigh and the Delano, and to the north, the W hotel and the fabled Fontainebleau, visitors gossiped and preened in wispy caftans, eyes darting now and then to catch a glimpse, perhaps, of Cameron Diaz, who has been seen around town on the arm of Alex Rodriguez; Jennifer Lopez, who was said to have embarked last week on a whirlwind shopping spree at Hermes, Dolce & Gabbana, and Pucci; or Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes, who recently kicked up their heels at the Soho Beach House. □



People gather near the pool at The Standard hotel in Miami Beach, Fla. An off-season boom is transforming the city and its environs from a wan summer ghost town into a magnet for visitors of every stripe.

(B. P. Fernandez/The New York Times)

officer of the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau, which has seen occupancy rates at luxury hotels jump by 16 percent the first week of August, compared to the same period last year. Torrid temperatures (the mercury last week climbed to the mid-90s) had done little to scare off visitors, he said, since so many were experiencing heat waves at home.

In summer here, he said, "the lines are shorter, the drinks are cheaper, and

that is South Beach's town center, chattering in Portuguese, Spanish, French, Italian — and a smattering of Brooklynese. At least half of all visitors are from international markets, Aedo said, many from Europe but especially Latin America, where, in some parts, winter is just setting in. Some sampled carpaccio di manzo at Quattro or gawked at the perversely skeletal parking garage designed by Herzog & de Meuron, an anchor to the west. Oth-

for bargains, and in some instances scouring the city for second homes. The Brazilians are "their own sort of animal right now," said Roma Cohen, an owner of Alchemist.

"Literally, they will call us from the airport, asking 'Do you have the latest Celine or Proenza Schouler bag?'" he said, and they are prepared to pay \$3,300 or more for one of those coveted labels.

Elsewhere in town, patrons jostled for tables at Prime

President Morales accuses U.S.

LA PAZ, Bolivia (AP) — Bolivian President Evo Morales is accusing the United States of inciting a march by indigenous protesters against a Brazilian-financed highway his government is intent on building through an Amazon nature preserve.

Morales says his government isn't ruling out expelling the U.S. Agency for International Development.

It's not the first time Bolivia's leftist leader has threatened to expel USAID.

His critics say he's using the U.S. agency as a scapegoat for trying to explain away opposition from indigenous groups in Bolivia's eastern lowlands to development projects and oil and gas exploration.

Bolivia expelled the U.S. ambassador and U.S. drug agents in late 2008, accusing them of aiding his opponents. □

Summit demands greater voice

LA CEIBA, Honduras (AP) — A global summit of African descendants has demanded that the United Nations and other world bodies hold permanent forums on improving their communities' economic and social conditions.

The U.N.-backed 1st World Summit of African Descendants held in Honduras has also called on the U.N. to create a development fund to fight poverty and protect the human rights of Afro-descendants.

The summit held this weekend in the city of La Ceiba issued its declaration Saturday night, which also demanded justice for victims of racism.

Over 1,000 representatives from 70 nations gathered for the event. The 2nd World Summit was scheduled for 2014 in Madrid.

Around 20 percent of Latin America's population is of African descent, many of whom live in poverty. □

Medical student drowns in St. Kitts

BASSETTERRE, St. Kitts (AP) — Police say a medical student from Chicago has drowned in a swimming pool on the Caribbean island of St. Kitts.

Island police say in a statement that the 22-year-old woman apparently fell into the pool at the Sugar Bay Club in Frigate Bay. She was identified as Maneet Kaur, a student at Windsor University School of Medicine on the island.

The statement said two other students tried to rescue her and had to be hospitalized.

Both have since been discharged. Police officials said Sunday's incident was under investigation and declined to release details.

An autopsy was planned. □

Peru ferries stranded tourists to Lima

LIMA, Peru (AP) — A Peruvian military plane has flown 75 tourists to Lima after they were stranded in the highland city of Cuzco by the grounding of a commercial airline over alleged safety lapses. State aeronautics safety official Ramon Gamarra said the tourists were flown to Peru's capital Sunday so they could make international flights.

He said there are plans to ferry more tourists out of Cuzco, which is the gateway to the Inca citadel of Machu Picchu, on Monday.

Authorities suspended all Peruvian Airlines flights last Thursday, citing maintenance shortcomings. The airline was Peru's No. 2 domestic carrier after LAN, with 16 percent of inland flights.

President Ollanta Humala has announced plans for Peru to again have a national flag carrier. Aero Peru went bankrupt in 1999. □

Tropical Storm Irene speeds toward Puerto Rico

DANICA COTO

Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)

— Tropical Storm Irene barreled toward Puerto Rico

were long lines at check-in counters and at the airport hotel.

Jenny Chappell of Richmond, Virginia, returning



Surfers jump off the rocks into the ocean as tropical storm Irene approaches the island in Luquillo, Puerto Rico, Sunday, August 21, 2011. The storm, packing winds of about 50 mph (85 kph) and tracking westward at 20 mph (32 kph), was expected to strengthen and pass near the U.S. island of Puerto Rico later Sunday or early Monday.

(AP Photo/Ricardo Arduengo)

late Sunday after hitting St. Croix, packing heavy rains and winds that closed airports and flooded low-lying areas in the Leeward Islands. The fast-moving storm, moving west-northwest at roughly 15 mph (24 kph), was taking an unpredictable path that left people in the islands of the U.S. Caribbean anxious about the winds and rain to come. On its current forecast track, the U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami said Irene was expected to pass near or over Puerto Rico late Sunday with maximum winds of 60 mph (95 kph). It's expected to strengthen into a hurricane on Monday as it approaches Hispaniola, the island shared by the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Nearly 600,000 people in Haiti still live without shelter after last year's earthquake. On Sunday night, Irene's center was some 90 miles (145 kilometers) east-southeast of Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico's main airport was swamped with people, the usual Sunday crowds combined with people rushing to get off the island before the storm or stranded because flights to a number of other islands had been canceled. There

from a weeklong business trip in Puerto Rico, was among those booking a room at the airport hotel, assuming that her 1 a.m. flight, at the height of the storm, would be canceled. "My friend told me get a room, get some water, get some snacks because if anything goes down you'll need it," Chappell said. Strong winds and battering rain were expected late Sunday over Puerto Rico, including its outlying islands of Culebra and Vieques, where 150 tourists were evacuated, according to Gov. Luis Fortuno. At least 4,000 people were without power and another 13,000 without water as the storm approached. U.S. forecasters had earlier expected the storm's center to pass just south of Puerto Rico's southern coast, but now said it could pass near or over the island of nearly 4 million inhabitants.

"The storm is wobbling a little bit. It is moving more to the west-northwest than we anticipated earlier," said Cristina Forbes, an oceanographer at the center. Sustained winds must reach 74 mph (119 kph) for the storm to be classified as a hurricane. In the U.S. Virgin

Islands, Gov. John deJongh declared a state of emergency in order to impose storm curfews.

"We've got what appears to be a direct hit on St. Croix," said governor spokesman Jean Greaux, who did not immediately have details about any possible damage on the largest and poorest of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Emergency shelters were opened on St. Croix, where the port was closed. The Hovensa LLC refinery on St. Croix also closed its port because of the storm but operations remained normal at the refinery, one of the largest in the Western Hemisphere, said spokesman Steve Strahan.

In the southeastern Puerto Rican town of Patillas, Edgar Morales, owner of a roadside food stall, was one of the few business owners who opened Sunday despite the approaching storm. "We're going to stay open until God allows it," said Morales, 35, who scanned TV news about the tropical storm with some of his customers. Jose Rivas, 46, said he woke up early Sunday to place storm shutters on his house, fill his car with gas and take out money. He said he and his wife along with their two sons will spend the night at a hotel next to their house in Patillas. "We'll leave as soon as the sea starts rising," he said. In advance of Irene, Puerto Rican authorities urged islanders to secure their homes and pick up debris that high winds could turn into dangerous projectiles. Maritime officials advised people to stay away from the ocean because Irene could bring a dangerous storm surge to the coast.

"I strongly recommend that swimmers and recreational boaters avoid the ocean and that the general public stay away from shoreline rocks until the tropical storm passes and weather and surf conditions normalize," said Capt. Drew Pearson, a U.S. Coast Guard commander. □

Chavez's supporters shave heads in solidarity

IAN JAMES

Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

— Supporters of President Hugo Chavez shaved their heads in solidarity with their leader's struggle against cancer on Sunday as hundreds prayed and sang at a televised event.

Barbers shaved off the hair of several men and at least one woman while the crowd swayed to a religious song. Chavez, bald from chemotherapy, smiled and waved to the crowd. "We're Christians. Christ unites us," Chavez said in a speech, noting that others had decided to join him and "change their look." Chavez said he may undergo a third round of chemotherapy but expressed optimism that the worst of his illness has passed.

"I no longer feel sick but rather that I'm convalescing from the illness I had," Chavez said.

Those attending included a group of six from the Dominican Republic who shaved their heads in a show of sup-



Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez, fourth from left, poses for pictures with people from Dominican Republic who shaved their heads in solidarity with Chavez's struggle against cancer at Miraflores presidential palace in Caracas, Venezuela, Sunday, Aug. 21, 2011.

Associated Press

port outside the Venezuelan Embassy in their country on Friday. Chavez greeted the Dominicans with hugs and stood arm-in-arm with them. He also grew emo-

tional as he recalled meeting a young cancer victim who gave him a Venezuelan flag some time ago. He said the girl's name was Genesis, and she had an

advanced brain tumor. He said she had approached him at an event and given him the flag. "She told me, 'Chavez, I'm going. I know I'm going ... In this flag,

Chavez, I'll stay with you," Chavez said, his voice cracking and his eyes tearing up for a moment.

Chavez embraced the flag and vowed to survive. "It's time to live," he said.

Chavez returned from his latest round of chemotherapy in Cuba on Aug. 14.

He underwent surgery in Cuba in June that removed a cancerous tumor from his pelvic region. He has not specified where the tumor was located. He has said the chemotherapy has been going well and aims to ensure no malignant cells reappear.

Chavez bowed his head during a prayer and later clapped along with the music. Young men with close-cropped hair stood in the crowd as shouts of "Hallelujah!" and "Amen!" rose at the end of a song.

The Venezuelan president defended his practice of providing the public with updates on his medical condition rather than having one of his doctors release reports. □

Aruhiba, The 1 and Only Homemade Aruban Cigar



ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba. Petrocchi has always had an interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crop. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba Cigars in Aruba. The process took ten years. Petrocchi dedication to the cigars is important for the molding and process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. The cigar box is



specially designed for the cigars with the logo "Aruhiba". Petrocchi considers Aruhiba a promotion for Aruba through fine quality cigars.

The company sells International cigars as well. Buy a gift box of Aruhiba Corona with five cigars and you will get 1 FREE cigar of \$35. Located at the Historic Dutch Windmill. Open from Monday to Saturday from 9am till

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Golf simulators offer year-round, no-embarrassment play

BILL PENNINGTON

© 2011 New York Times

The overwhelming majority of recreational golfers do not take lessons. It is another one of those quizzical, only-in-golf mysteries. Most of us could use help and

on the living room wall without help?

Of course not. And we all know golf is infinitely harder than installing a flat-screen television. Golf is harder than building a flat-screen television. By hand. In the

one.

"It's a golf laboratory where people relax and swing without any thought to who is around them — because there really isn't anyone," said Randy Henry, a long-time, top-ranked teacher

teaching pro at the Chelsea Piers golf complex in Manhattan, said golfers trying to make a swing change focus better on a simulator.

"The less they can see of the ball flight, the better they will do when learning something new," Hobbins said. "It lets them concentrate on the process, not the immediate result."

And then there's the weather advantage. Rain, snow or wind cannot ruin a lesson. Golfers can keep

swinging and keep their weekly or monthly lesson schedule all winter in cold climates. If it's 100 degrees outside, they can go inside to the air conditioning. Darkness does not stop the instruction either.

Simulators have been around for a couple of decades. Once they were fuzzy, bizarrely inaccurate machines. You hit your ball into what seemed like a quilt hung over a concrete wall. The golf course scene was generic. □



Mike Saccone, left, receives tips on posture from Mike Buja, an instructor, during his first lessons on a PGA Tour Superstore's indoor golf simulator, in Atlanta, Aug. 20, 2011. One new and increasingly prominent dynamic in the instruction landscape is the indoor golf simulator, a device that allows for a more private and multidimensional lesson experience.

(T. Lynne Pixley/The New York Times)

the help is widely available, so, naturally, most golfers instead keep their heads down (or not) and plod on, hoping to master the game on their own.

According to the National Golf Foundation, roughly 11 percent of all golfers take lessons.

Some golfers avoid lessons because they believe they cannot be helped. Which just proves what golf can do to you. It's also most likely not true. Some golfers have taken exactly one lesson, and when they did not improve as much as they had hoped, they never went back — for 15 years now. Some golfers don't want to spend the money, even though they buy a new driver every spring and spend \$200 a year on range balls.

Other golfers, and this is a big group, like to work things out for themselves. I've never quite understood this. Did they learn to drive a car by themselves? Would they install a flat-screen TV

dark.

Anyway, one of the real reasons people don't take lessons is the embarrassment factor. A golfer has to acknowledge needing help and then go to a practice range where other people might be watching and submit to an overhaul of some part of the golf swing.

It's a little like asking for directions when you're lost. Did I mention that women are four times more likely to take lessons than men?

One new and increasingly prominent dynamic in the instruction landscape is the indoor golf simulator, a device that allows for a more private and multidimensional lesson experience. Lessons given on simulators, where the golfer hits a ball into a flat or wraparound screen in a studioliike atmosphere, have grown in popularity in the last five years, especially among beginners, juniors and women.

It is not necessarily a better lesson, but it is a different

of recreational and tour pros who uses simulators daily in his instruction. "That alone improves the teaching environment. Then we get all the readouts on the swing and video of it too. But it's more than technology. Yes, we get a thousand readouts of a golfer's swing. Then, a trained teacher can pick the one thing that will fix a thousand things."

At the PGA Tour Superstore retail outlets dotted around the country, more than 28,000 lessons are given on simulators annually.

"The privacy of a simulator studio is important to a beginner or to a golfer who has never taken a lesson before," said Michael Sole, a teaching pro who gives about seven lessons daily on the simulators at the PGA Tour Superstore in Roswell, Ga. "You know, it's away from prying eyes. You don't have to worry about upsetting someone on the range if you hit one sideways."

John Hobbins, a senior

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A “ninja warrior” upgrade into network prime time

MIKE HALE

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The American embrace of full-contact Japanese game shows – from reconditioned originals like the former “MXC” on Spike to clones like “Wipeout” on ABC – has to do with the appeal of bright colors, spectacular crashes and other people’s embarrassment and discomfort. And, of course, the pleasure of rooting for a winner: After all the carnage, someone is crowned champion.

The popularity of these Japanese-style shows will be affirmed Monday night, when the two-hour season finale of the cult favorite series “American Ninja Warrior” – in which Americans compete for a chance to travel to Yokohama to take on the brutal obstacle course of the semiannual Japanese televised competition “Sasuke” – moves from the cable channel G4 to its sister network NBC. For one night at least, the course’s rope ladders, half-pipes and rolling barrels will be shown in network prime time, keeping company with the likes of “Hawaii Five-0” and “Bachelor Pad.”

This increased exposure for “American Ninja Warrior” – and by extension for “Sasuke” – comes despite the fact that these shows’ distinctive, addictive premise is a profoundly un-American one: a game in which nobody wins.

Almost nobody, that is. In 26 previous “Sasuke” shows,

dating to 1997, each including 100 mostly Japanese competitors, only three men have successfully completed the obstacle course: one in 1999, one in 2006 and one in 2010. (Reflecting the democratic nature of the

it to the third round – six out of 100 in the most recent competition, in January – and then meekly succumb, losing their grip on the spinning Doorknob Grasper or the painfully thin ledges of the Ultimate Cliff Hanger

among its most highly rated shows, it decided to create the “American Ninja Warrior” series, in which 300 candidates go through a preliminary competition as well as rounds of obstacle-course training in Califor-

the six contestants who reached the third round were American. This represented a stunning reversal: No more than one American had gone that far in any previous competition. You could look at this trend in several ways. Perhaps it’s heartening that as American fortunes appear to be in decline in so many areas, there is one place where we’re on the rise, even if it is just a Japanese obstacle course. Or perhaps it’s dispiriting that American money and aggressiveness are threatening to dominate an event that has been a semiannual festival of friendly competition and odd-ball theatricality for Japanese audiences.

In the “American Ninja Warrior” finale Monday night, you will not see anything besides the 10 American competitors. As far as the show is concerned, the other 90 contestants don’t exist. If a non-American finishes the course, you won’t find out from NBC. (G4 now shows the three-hour Japanese broadcast of the full competition sometime after its American series finishes, and with much less fanfare.)

The carnival atmosphere that helps make the Japanese show entertaining, with contestants dressed in Superman costumes or carrying octopuses, is absent. So is the congenial ambience in which failure is expected and success is a pleasant surprise. □



A contestant traverses an obstacle course on the show “American Ninja Warrior,” in an undated handout image. The popularity of Japanese-style game shows will be affirmed on Monday night, when NBC broadcasts the season finale of “American Ninja Warrior,” which is usually broadcast on G4.

(Brandon Hickman/G4 via The New York Times)

truly rigorous competition, which attracts celebrities as well as a variety of professional athletes, the three winners, all Japanese, have been a crabber, a fisherman and a shoe salesman.) Out of 2,600 total competitors, only 22, none of them American, have made it to the course’s fourth and final stage; 90 percent are eliminated in the first stage.

What happens, typically, is that a handful of men make

and splashing into the water below. Congratulations are handed out, some hearty banzais uttered, and then everyone heads home to prepare for the next nearly hopeless competition six months hence.

But this is not the American way, and a few years ago G4 set out to do something about it. With broadcasts of the original Japanese “Sasuke” (dubbed and re-titled “Ninja Warrior”) rank-

nia. From them, a team of 10 Americans is selected to join the 100-man field in Japan.

This approach has yielded not just a recurring eight-episode TV series for American consumption (the first six episodes of the current season of “American Ninja Warrior” have averaged about 300,000 viewers for G4) but a noticeable improvement on the course: In January’s game four of

Kyle Busch outlasts Johnson in Michigan

Kyle Busch celebrates his victory in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series auto race at Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn, Mich., Sunday, Aug. 21, 2011.

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SPORTS Aruba TODAY



Novak Djokovic, of Serbia, get his shoulder worked on by trainer Hugo Gravid, left, during the men's final against Andy Murray, of Britain, at the Western & Southern Open tennis tournament, Sunday, Aug. 21, 2011, in Mason, Ohio.

Associated Press

Djokovic quits in final with sore shoulder

JOE KAY

AP Sports Writer

MASON, Ohio (AP)—Novak Djokovic's remarkable winning streak ended with a grimace, stopped by a sore shoulder that forced him to retire in the second set on Sunday and gave Andy Murray the Western & Southern Open title.

It was the Serb's first bad moment in his nearly flawless season. Djokovic had won 16 consecutive matches since his only loss of the season, in the semifinals against Roger Federer on June 3 at Roland Garros.

The winning streak has taken its toll, one that puts a new spin on the U.S. Open.

Continued on Next Page

HOME GROWN



Simpson wins Wyndham for 1st PGA Tour title

Webb Simpson reacts on the 18th hole after winning the Wyndham Championship golf tournament in Greensboro, N.C., Sunday, Aug. 21, 2011.

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DJOKOVIC

Continued from Previous Page

Djokovic talked about feeling exhausted in Cincinnati, coming off his record fifth Masters series title in Montreal last week. He said his serving shoulder had bothered him for about the last 10 days, but he'd been able to manage the soreness and keep winning. On Sunday, he couldn't go on. "There is no good loss, that's for sure," said Djokovic, now 57-2 on the season. "The good thing is there's a week, eight days to the start of the Open. "I'm confident I can recover and be ready for the U.S. Open." He was completely off his game against the fourth-seeded Murray, won the first set 6-4 and was ahead 3-0 in the second when Djokovic decided just before the rain came that he couldn't continue. Djokovic had his shoulder treated after he lost the first set, grimacing at one point.



Andy Murray, of Britain, holds the trophy following the men's final against Novak Djokovic, from Serbia, at the Western & Southern Open tennis tournament, Sunday, Aug. 21, 2011 in Mason, Ohio. Djokovic retired with a shoulder injury and Murray leading 6-4, 3-0.

Associated Press

With his serve registering only in double-digits and his forehand limited by the pain, Djokovic realized he couldn't compete. He said he would have retired even if the rain had temporarily stopped the match. "I could have maybe played another couple of games, but what for?" he said. "I cannot beat a player like Murray today with one stroke." It was Murray's second title this season. The 24-year-old Scotsman also won at the Queen's Club. He lost his other final match to Djokovic at the Australian Open. Djokovic felt worn-down heading into the final, the strain of all those recent matches catching up with him. He said his loathing for losing was pulling him through matches. It wasn't enough on Sunday. Djokovic was off his game at the outset, repeatedly hitting forehands, backhands and volleys everywhere but in the court. Murray broke his serve to open the match and won 10 of the first 12

points. Could Djokovic win another one while running on fumes and playing with a bum shoulder? By the end of the first set, he knew the answer. "I was generally exhausted playing many matches, but the exhaustion is not the reason," Djokovic said. "The reason is shoulder pain. I just could not serve." Murray was more rested, though not by choice. He lost in the opening round at Montreal a week ago, giving him unwanted time to relax and work on his game. The break seemed to help — he didn't lose a set all week in Cincinnati. "I had five or six days to get ready here," said Murray, who won his first Masters series championship in Cincinnati in 2008. "I've always played well on this court." With the crowd behind him, Djokovic got back into the match by breaking Murray to tie the first set at 3. Murray broke him right back, ending a long baseline rally by coming to the net for a put-away volley. □



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Sharapova rallies to win Western & Southern title

JOE KAY

AP Sports Writer

CINCINNATI (AP) — Maria Sharapova rallied to beat Jelena Jankovic 4-6, 7-6 (3), 6-3 in the Western & Southern Open final on Sunday. The fourth-seeded Sharapova fended off Jankovic's seven breakpoint chances in the last set alone to claim her second title of the season. Sharapova's best moments came in the tiebreaker, when she won the last five points to level the match.

"That's pretty much it, putting five points together that were well-played," she said.

Such stretches were rare in a ragged match that lasted 2 hours, 49 minutes and had a pair of brief rain delays. The 14th-ranked Jankovic extended her streak of 17 months without a singles title. The Serb won at Cincinnati in 2009, but hasn't claimed a championship since Indian Wells on March 21 last year.

"This match could have gone either way," she said. "I had my chances. It showed the match is not over until you shake the hand."

Jankovic shook hands and then sat in her chair after the match, biting a white towel while staring straight

ahead, thinking about what had just happened. The match ended when her baseline forehand sailed wide.

Despite the loss, Jankovic was upbeat. She came to Cincinnati feeling rusty and lacking confidence after playing few matches lately and having little success.

"I'm pretty unpredictable," she said. "If somebody told me I was going to play a final here, I would right away sign the paper."

It was a sweet about-face for Sharapova, who reached lost to Kim Clijsters in last year's Cincinnati final.

"It's been a great year for me so far," Sharapova said. "It can always be better or worse. I'm definitely proud I've gone further than last year, after the disappointing loss here last year."

Clijsters withdrew this year with an abdominal strain that will also cause her to miss the U.S. Open, where she's won the last two times. The tournament ended with a pairing of players who had only one singles title between them this season, Sharapova's championship at Rome.

Jankovic, who was ranked No. 1 as recently as 2008, has struggled with back,

wrist and ankle injuries during her long run with only one singles title. The Serb reached only one other final this season, losing at Monterrey.

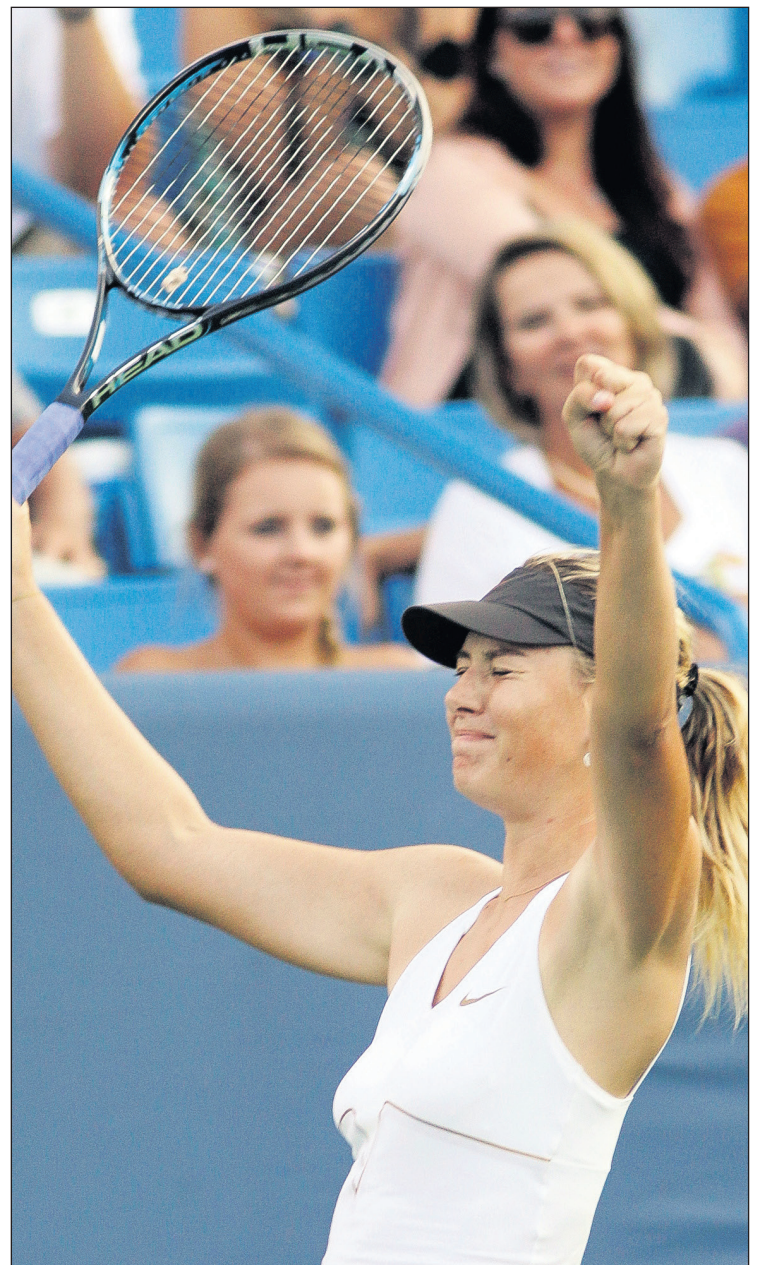
Rain briefly delayed the start of Sunday's match, and again for a few minutes in the fourth game, when the players stayed in their chairs waiting for it to stop.

Sharapova was more aggressive at the start, breaking Jankovic's serve twice while pulling ahead 4-1. She won 19 of the first 27 points and appeared to be in control. Then Jankovic changed the momentum, breaking Sharapova three times in a row. She won the set when Sharapova double faulted.

Neither player could hold serve in the third set, which started with six straight breaks. Sharapova threw back her head and pumped her left arm after holding serve to go up 4-3.

"You find yourself in the third set, you've played two hours, it's a finals match — obviously a lot of emotion going through it," Sharapova said.

When Jankovic doubled faulted twice to lose the next game on her serve, Sharapova was in position to close it out. □



Maria Sharapova, from Russia, celebrates after defeating Jelena Jankovic, from Serbia, 4-6, 7-6 (3), 6-3, in the women's final at the Western & Southern Open tennis tournament, Sunday, Aug. 21, 2011, in Mason, Ohio.

Associated Press

Kyle Busch outlasts Jimmie Johnson in Michigan

By NOAH TRISTER

AP Sports Writer

BROOKLYN, Mich. (AP) —

Kyle Busch won his 23rd race on NASCAR's Sprint Cup circuit, pulling even with brother Kurt in career victories.

Now, Kyle would like to match another of Kurt's accomplishments — winning a series title.

"He's always still got that carrot over me," Kyle Busch said. "Certainly, being the younger brother, I've had a little bit shorter time being here, but still, it's great to see both of us be as competitive as we've been and as successful as we've been."

Kyle Busch outlasted Jimmie Johnson on Sunday in a green-white-checked finish at Michigan International Speedway, winning his fourth Cup race of the year. Busch leads the series standings by 10 points over Johnson and is assured of a spot in the Chase for the Sprint Cup.

Kurt Busch won the series championship in 2004. Now, his 26-year-old brother might be the driver with the best chance of ending Johnson's five-year hold



Kyle Busch crosses the finish line to win the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series auto race at Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn, Mich., Sunday, Aug. 21, 2011.

on the title.

There are three races remaining before the 10-race Chase begins.

"Certainly we've built ourselves into championship contenders this year," Kyle Busch said. "There's a great opportunity for us to win three more races before the Chase starts. We'd love nothing more than to see that, and of course carry on our strong runs through the final 10 weeks. It's just a

matter of being consistent."

Kyle Busch passed Johnson with about a dozen laps remaining and was opening up a comfortable margin when Kurt Busch scraped a wall, forcing a caution from laps 198-201. The yellow flag erased much of Kyle Busch's lead, but he was able to fight off a quick move from Johnson after the restart and pull away. It was Busch's first Cup win at Michigan.

Brad Keselowski finished third, his third consecutive top-three finish and fifth top-10 in his last six races. Mark Martin was fourth.

Keselowski has been impressive recently despite breaking his left ankle earlier this month during a test session.

He's now 12th in the standings, and with two victories, he looks likely to make the Chase as a wild card.

The top 10 drivers and the

Associated Press

two drivers ranked 11th to 20th with the most victories earn spots for the Chase.

"I would like to make the top 10 on our own merits, if for no other reason than to push away all the naysayers of the wild-card system," Keselowski said. "It's going to be good either way. I'm a big fan of the wild card. It's going to be something that's going to reward me. I think it's a great way of showing a commitment to our fans to rewarding those who can win races."

Denny Hamlin, Kyle Busch's teammate with Joe Gibbs Racing, would be the other wild card if the regular season ended now, but he did little to help himself Sunday with a 35th-place showing. Hamlin, who had to stop in at the garage about two thirds of the way through the race, is in 14th place with one win — at Michigan back in June.

Pole-sitter Greg Biffle led for 86 of the first 100 laps Sunday, but it didn't last. Kyle Busch passed him around the midway point of the planned 200-lap, 400-mile race.

Jeff Gordon took the lead not long after that, and Johnson appeared to be in great shape when he made a pit stop just before a caution that started on lap 169.

Johnson was able to stay out on the track while other cars made pit stops under the yellow flag, and he led on the restart.

But Kyle Busch was lurking back in third place in his No. 18 Toyota and eventually passed Johnson.

"Wish I could have hung on," Johnson said. "I got away from Kyle, but as I was pulling away, I was sliding the car pretty bad. ... Eventually, he got to me. With that last restart I had a shot once again, got a good restart next to him, but couldn't make it happen."

Busch has three straight top-three showings. He was second to Keselowski at Pocono and third at Watkins Glen.

Busch came up short at Watkins Glen in a two-lap dash to the finish. □

Sutton wins Vuelta 2nd stage; Bennati takes lead

PLAYAS DE ORIHUELA, Spain (AP) —

Australian rider Christopher Sutton edged out the pack to win the second stage of the Spanish Vuelta, while Daniele Bennati took the leader's jersey from Leopard teammate Jakob Fuglsang.

Under a scorching sun with temperatures reaching 104 Fahrenheit, Sutton completed the 109-mile course from La Nucia to Playas de Orihuela in 4 hours, 11 minutes, 41 seconds.

"For me it's a dream come true to win a stage at a Grand Tour," Sutton said. "We don't exactly have the perfect lead-out train here, but what we do have is strength."

Jesus Rosendo of Spain and three other cyclists

broke away from the main pack but the peloton caught them nine miles from the finish line.

Bennati finished sixth with the same time as Sutton in the peloton of more than 80 cyclists.

"I am very happy to have the leader's jersey," Bennati said. "It's an honor to take the race lead in a Grand Tour. I would be happier if I had taken the race lead with the win."

Bennati dedicated the achievement to teammate Wouter Weylandt, who was killed in an accident during this year's Giro d'Italia.

"I have taken wins since Wouter has passed away, but this is the first honor I dedicate specifically to him," Bennati said. "We didn't know each other



Australian Christopher Sutton from the Sky team reacts as he crosses the finish line to win the second stage of the Spanish Vuelta cycling race over 174 kilometers with start in La Nucia and finish in Playas de Orihuela, Spain, Sunday Aug. 21, 2011.

Associated Press

long, but in the time that we got to know each other we became close friends."

The Italian leads three teammates at the top of the overall standings. Defending champion Vincenzo Nibali of Italy is 4 seconds behind.

Matthew Goss of Austra-

lia became the first rider to withdraw from the 21-stage race.

Monday's third stage is a 101-mile ride from Petrer to Totana along Spain's southeastern coast.

For the first time in 33 years, the Vuelta is set to return to the Basque country during its final week. □



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Simpson claims 1st PGA tour win at Wyndham

JOEDY McCREARY

AP Sports Writer

GREENSBORO, North Carolina (AP) — Webb Simpson shot a 67 on Sunday to claim his first PGA tour win, a three-stroke victory in the Wyndham Championship. Simpson finished at 18-under 262 and collected \$936,000.

George McNeill (64) was at 15 under, with Tommy Gainey (69) another stroke back at the final event before the PGA Tour playoffs.

Carl Pettersson (69), Vijay Singh (65), Jerry Kelly (65), Kyung-tae Kim (66) and Charles Howell III (67) each finished at 13 under.

Simpson turned in a steady, bogey-free round and gave himself plenty of breathing room with consecutive birdies on Nos. 15 and 16.

After taking the lead during Round 3 with a late five-hole stretch of four birdies and an eagle, Simpson opened his final round with eight straight pars before moving to 16 under with a birdie on the par-4 No. 9.

He stayed there until late in the day. Birdies on the par-5 15th and the par-3 16th gave him a three-shot lead with two holes to go.

McNeill made a late charge, with the former Florida State player moving to 15 under with a birdie on No. 17, his sixth birdie of the round. But all he could do after that was hope for a few late bogeys from Simpson.

"Honestly, I thought it was going to be a lot lower," McNeill said of the winning score. "I can only control myself. I can't control what everybody else does. I'm very happy with the way I hit it, the way I played, the

way I putted."

Several players with strong Atlantic Coast Conference ties played pivotal roles during the fourth round at the country club where the ACC was founded in 1953. Simpson was the ACC's player of the year for the Demon Deacons in 2008. McNeill was an all-conference player for the Seminoles in the late 1990s.

And Pettersson grew up in Greensboro, played at North Carolina State, serves on this tournament's board of directors, won it in 2008 and made the daily 70-mile commute from his home in Raleigh.

"I'm disappointed. I'm a competitor," Pettersson said. "I wanted to win this one badly, but Webb outplayed us all."

Pettersson turned in perhaps the most remarkable birdie of the tournament on the par-4 first hole. After sending his drive well wide of the fairway and into a flower pot, he wound up chipping in from about 55 feet.

Gainey, a South Carolina native known as "Tommy Two Gloves" because he wears them on both hands, led or shared the lead after each of the first two rounds. After falling off the pace with two bogeys and a double bogey midway through the round, he reeled off four consecutive birdies on Nos. 12-15 to climb back in it.

The focus this week wasn't solely on the leaders, but on the names moving up and down the FedEx Cup points list.

The Wyndham annually marks the last chance for players to claim spots in the playoffs, and some big names came to Greens-

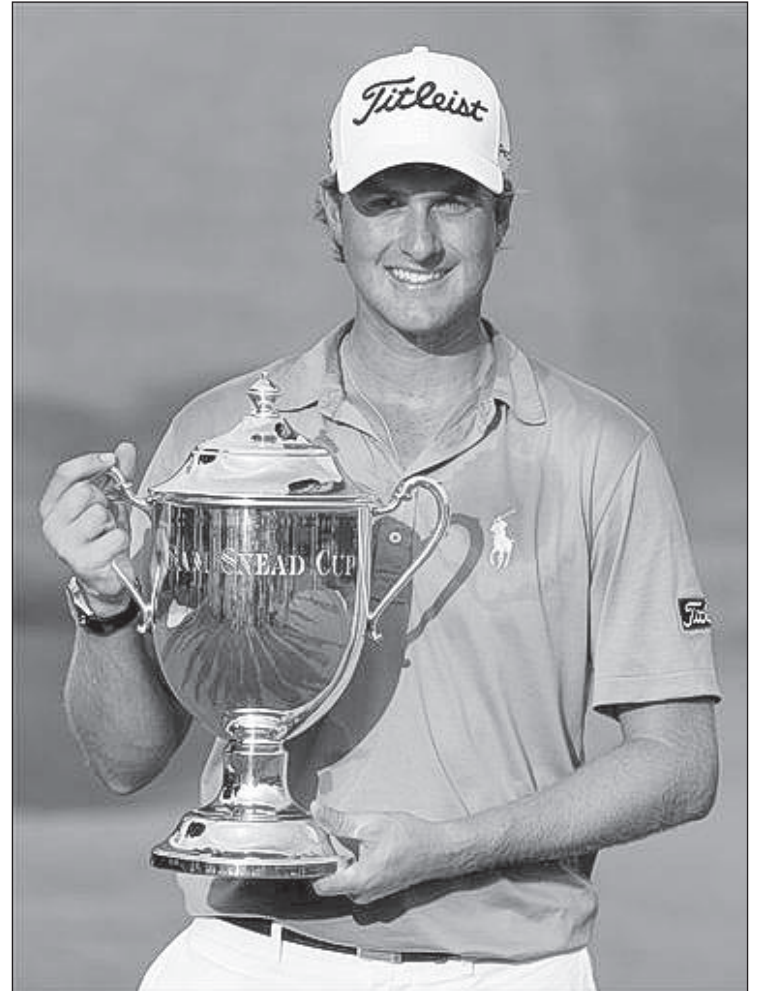
boro hoping to play their way in.

Padraig Harrington, who called off a family vacation so he could try to escape the playoff bubble, finished at 6 under and jumped from No. 130 to No. 124. The top 125 qualify for The Barclays later this week in New Jersey.

Ernie Els, who entered at No. 126, made it into the playoff field despite shooting a final-round 72. His 8 under finish pushed him to 118th.

"You don't know in these playoffs," Els said. "I've got to play good golf though. I played really good the first two days. I'd like to get that back."

Among those who didn't make it: Justin Leonard missed a 13-foot putt on the 18th, and that left him at No. 126. □



Webb Simpson poses with the trophy after winning the Wyndham Championship golf tournament in Greensboro, N.C., Sunday, Aug. 21, 2011.

Associated Press

Pettersen beats Choi in playoff at Safeway Classic

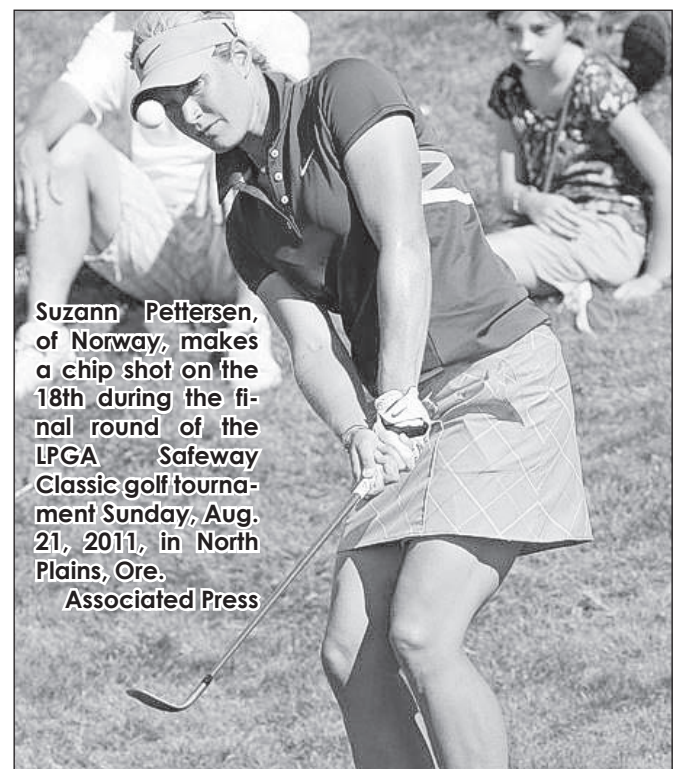
ANNE M. PETERSON

AP Sports Writer

NORTH PLAINS, Oregon (AP) — Suzann Pettersen overcame a nine-stroke deficit with a 7-under 64 and beat Na Yeon Choi with a par on the first hole of a playoff to win the LPGA Safeway Classic on Sunday.

In the playoff, Choi's second shot on the par-4 18th went into the water to the right of the green, and she missed a putt for bogey before Pettersen sank her winning putt at Pumpkin Ridge Golf Club. Pettersen won her second LPGA Tour title of the year and eighth overall. The Norwegian star jumped to No. 2 in the world rankings behind Yani Tseng.

Choi finished with a 73 to match Pettersen at 6 under on the Ghost Creek Course. □



Suzann Pettersen, of Norway, makes a chip shot on the 18th during the final round of the LPGA Safeway Classic golf tournament Sunday, Aug. 21, 2011, in North Plains, Ore.

Associated Press

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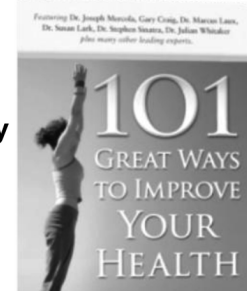
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Co-authored by Aruba's
Carlos Viana, OMD, CCN

To counter aging, boomers will spend billions

DAVID CRARY

AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Baby boomers heading into what used to be called retirement age are providing a 70 million-member strong market for legions of companies, entrepreneurs and cosmetic surgeons eager to capitalize on their "forever young" mindset, whether it's through wrinkle creams, face-lifts or workout regimens.

It adds up to potential bonanza. The market research firm Global Industry Analysts projects that a boomer-fueled consumer base, "seeking to keep the dreaded signs of aging at bay," will push the U.S. market for anti-aging products from about \$80 billion now to more than \$114 billion by 2015.

The boomers, who grew up in a culture glamorizing youth, face an array of choices as to whether and how to be a part of that market. Anti-aging enthusiasts contend that life spans can be prolonged through interventions such as hormone replacement therapy and dietary supplements. Critics, including much of the medical establishment, say many anti-aging interventions are ineffective or harmful.

From mainstream organizations such as the National Institute on Aging, the general advice is to be a skeptic

consumer on guard for possible scams involving purported anti-aging products.

"Our culture places great value on staying young, but aging is normal," the institute says. "Despite claims about pills or treatments

Chicago's School of Public Health who has written extensively about aging. "It's always the same message: 'Aging is your fault and we've got the cure,'" Olshansky said. "Invest in yourself, in the simple things we know work. Get a good



Dr. Robert Goldman, one of the co-founders of the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine, is photographed in his trophy room in Chicago with hardware from 20 Guinness World Records for strength and endurance. "People should be healthy and strong well into 100 to 120 years of age," Goldman says in a biographical video. "That's what's really exciting - to live in a time period when the impossible is truly possible."

(AP Photo/M. Spencer Green)

that lead to endless youth, no treatments have been proven to slow or reverse the aging process."

Its advice for aging well is basic: Eat a healthy diet, exercise regularly, don't smoke. "If someone is promising you today that you can slow, stop or reverse aging, they're likely trying hard to separate you from your money," said S. Jay Olshansky, a professor at the University of Illinois-

pair of running or walking shoes and a health club membership, and eat more fruits and vegetables."

But such advice hasn't curtailed the demand for anti-aging products, including many with hefty price tags that aren't covered by health insurance. These include cosmetic surgery procedures at \$10,000 or more, human growth hormone treatment at \$15,000 per year and a skin-care

product called Peau Mag-nifique that costs \$1,500 for a 28-day supply.

Another challenge for consumers is that many dietary supplements and cosmetics, unlike prescription drugs and over-the-counter medicines, aren't required to undergo government testing or review before they are marketed. The Food and Drug Administration and the Federal Trade Commission do crack down at times on egregiously false anti-aging claims, but generally there's little protection for people who don't get hoped-for results.

Mary Engle, director of the FTC's division of advertising practices, said her agency focuses on the cases that could cause serious harm, such as bogus cancer treatments that might prompt an ill person to forgo proper care. She said the agency lacks the resources to crack down comprehensively on ads with exaggerated claims that exploit customers' hopes for better looks or more energy.

"Often it doesn't rise to the level of fraud," she said. "There are so many problematic ads out there and we really have to pick and choose what we focus on." In contrast to the caution of mainstream organizations, there are many vocal promoters of anti-aging products and procedures, including the American

Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine. It hosts annual conferences in the U.S. and abroad, and claims 22,000 members, mostly physicians. In its mission statement, the academy says the disabilities associated with normal aging "are caused by physiological dysfunction which in many cases are amenable to medical treatment, such that the human life span can be increased."

One of the academy's co-founders is Robert Goldman, a doctor of osteopathic medicine. He contends that much of the resistance to the anti-aging movement comes from sectors of the health and pharmaceutical industries that feel threatened financially — for example by the surging use of over-the-counter nutritional supplements. "It all has to do with who's controlling the dollars," he said. Though many anti-aging interventions are expensive, Goldman said people on tight budgets still can take useful steps such as drinking purified water, taking vitamins and using sun screen. "People should be healthy and strong well into 100 to 120 years of age," Goldman says in a biographical video. "That's what's really exciting — to live in a time period when the impossible is truly possible." Olshansky, who over the years has been among Goldman's harshest critics, believes there will be scientific breakthroughs eventually, perhaps based on studies of the genes of long-lived people, that will help slow the rate of aging. In the meantime, Olshansky says, "I understand the need for personal freedom, the freedom to make bad decisions." □

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Facebook's spam program catches innocent users

By KEVIN BEGOS

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Facebook has sent notes of apology and is changing automated systems that blocked environmental activists and other people from posting on like-minded Facebook pages. The activists weren't victims of censorship, but rather an anti-spam computer algorithm that was impersonally doing what it was designed to do.

"Facebook is not — and has never been — in the business of disabling accounts or removing content simply because people are discussing controversial topics," Facebook spokesman Andrew Noyes said in a statement to The Associated Press. "On the contrary, we want Facebook to be a place where people can openly express their views and opinions, even if others don't agree with them."

The activists were flagged by an anti-spam program and told they couldn't post for 15 days. Other users, including an animal rescue activist, reported the problem, too. Some have even created new Facebook pages where people who've been blocked can commiserate.

"Our systems classify over 10 billion actions (suspicious logins, friend requests, etc.) and pieces of content (messages, Wall posts, etc.) every day," Noyes said. "Of course, no system is perfect, and we do sometimes make mistakes."

The activists weren't blocked by a page administrator for making off-topic posts or for offering questionable commercial services. They couldn't even post to pages run by people who agree with their views.

"The first feeling was surprise, because I'd been doing this for over a year, with no problem," said Gloria Forouzan of Pittsburgh, who has been very active in protests over natural gas drilling. "Then I found out a few others were blocked, and we all started getting angry."

Forouzan and others said

this week they still don't know what they did to trigger the blocks.

Their reaction also shows just how important Facebook has become to a wide range of groups who use the free service to network and spread messages. Pro-gas industry groups also have their own Facebook pages, too.

Facebook didn't provide details of the problem. To do so, they said, might help spammers find ways around the anti-spam software. Others note that people would complain if Facebook weakens its anti-spam programs too much, since spam would surge.

"Navigating that exact balance is always quite tricky. It's automated, done by algorithm, blind to the political value of the message," said Jules Polonetsky, the former chief privacy officer for AOL, and now a director of the Future of Privacy Forum, a Washington, D.C. think tank.

Forouzan said she posts links and comments to Facebook pages critical of gas drilling "every day, several times a day."

She said the posts only relate to hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, a process which injects chemical-laced water deep underground to break up shale rock and allow natural gas to escape. "Never jokes, never pat-the-bunny stuff," she said.

Experts agree that Facebook and other social media sites must use automated programs to protect against spam, but said more can be done to protect innocent people from losing access. Erica Newland, a policy analyst at the nonprofit Center for Democracy & Technology in San Francisco, which promotes a free Internet, said that when Facebook notifies someone that they've been blocked from posting, it needs to provide a link for legitimate users to appeal.

Facebook has an appeals process for people whose personal accounts were disabled, but doesn't appear to have one for the 15-day spam sentence.

That lack of an appeals process is one of the things that angered Burr Hubbell, a Pawling, N.Y., critic of gas drilling.

"I can't figure out how to even get a response to an e-mail, let alone talk to a person," said Hubbell, an attorney and stay-at-home-dad who was blocked about a week ago.

Hubbell said that during last year's Gulf oil spill he posted a lot of comments on Facebook pages, and at one point he got warned about posting comments too quickly. But with the recent block, he said, "This came without any warning at all."

Late Thursday, Hubbell and others got this message from Facebook:

"Your account was mistakenly blocked from posting on Pages. We apologize for any inconvenience this has caused. We've lifted the block from your account, and you should now be able to post again."

On Friday morning he tried to post again — and got the same message saying he was blocked for posting spam.

Now, Hubbell wonders if Facebook has really solved the problem.

Newland, the San Francisco policy analyst, said Facebook and other sites face incredible challenges, given the volume of content they handle. And she noted that the 15-day



Sanford Wallace, president of Cyber Promotions, poses with his computer and cans of Spam processed meat in Dresher, Pa, in this May 8, 1997 file photo. Wallace, the self-proclaimed "Spam King," pleaded not guilty during an initial court appearance Thursday Aug. 4, 2011 after being indicted July 6 on six counts of electronic mail fraud, three counts of intentional damage to a protected computer and two counts of criminal contempt. The indictment filed in San Jose federal court said Wallace compromised about 500,000 Facebook accounts between November 2008 and March 2009 by sending massive amounts of spam through the company's servers on three separate occasions.

Associated Press

posting ban was a type of warning, since the activists weren't kicked off Facebook.

"They have created their own rules, and are trying to enforce these rules, and are trying to do so in a generally fair way. Facebook's relationship to the content is very different from a newspaper," she said.

Many other people have had similar problems with social media, she said.

"The decision that a company makes about when to remove content can have a real impact on discourse," Newland said.

"It certainly highlights the need for greater transparency from Facebook."

Facebook's problem isn't new. Polonetsky said that during the most-active era of Internet spam, AOL's automated programs were catching and discarding 1 billion pieces of suspect e-mail every day. He also noted that since Facebook is free, it won't have huge customer-service call centers. And even if it did, the staff wouldn't be able to make complicated decisions about whether someone had been improperly blocked. □

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Oil prices should fall with Gadhafi overthrow

BREE FOWLER

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Oil prices around the world should start falling if Libyan rebels succeed in toppling Moammar Gadhafi's regime, though the full effect won't be felt for months.

On Sunday night, rebel forces pushed into Tripoli without meeting much resistance, hours after they overran a major military base that defended the capital. Opposition fighters captured Gadhafi's son and one-time heir apparent, Seif al-Islam.

Independent analyst Andrew Lipow said oil markets will likely respond Monday by sending prices lower in "a sign of relief that conflict has come to the end." But Lipow said it will take time for the market to erase the hefty price increase that resulted from the suspension of Libyan oil exports since the rebellion began in February.

When fighting broke out, oil was trading at around \$84 a barrel. It quickly spiked above \$93 and kept rising to a high above \$110 at the end of April.

Demand from emerging markets including China was also a factor in the rise. Oil has fallen recently along with stocks because of concerns about the global economy.

Libya used to export about 1.5 million barrels of oil per day, almost all of which



have been cut off. Although Libyan oil amounted to less than 2 percent of world demand, its loss affected prices because of its high quality and suitability for European refineries.

The European refineries have struggled to make up for the production loss despite an increase from Saudi Arabia. As a result, European markets should see the first and most significant drops in oil prices, Lipow said.

He added that any developments in the ongoing

European financial crisis could also move stock markets around the world this week and oil prices along with them. Independent analyst Jim Ritterbusch said that even if rebels manage to push Gadhafi out soon, the near-term effects on oil prices will be limited.

"Psychologically anyway, it's going to force some additional selling," Ritterbusch said. "But selling may not be pronounced because there's still a lot of question marks remaining" on how long it would take for pro-

duction to resume.

Michael Lynch, president of Strategic Energy & Economic Research, said that once Gadhafi is pushed out, Libya's new government could take the path of the Iraqis after the fall of Saddam Hussein and spend years fighting over every detail. Or it could follow Kuwait's example and quickly decide to bring in an outside company to get production restarted right away.

He added that there's always a chance that the

process could come to a halt if one of the rebel generals tries to seize power, or if different factions get caught up debating the country's new constitution and put off making decisions about oil production.

"They do have a good cadre of educated people, but they don't have a long record of competent self-government," Lynch said. "It would not be a bad bet to think there might be a chaotic period for a few months till they get organized." □

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Stock market begins to feed economic fear

**BERNARD CONDON
CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
AP Business Writers
NEW YORK (AP)**

— The stock market is starting to feed economic fear, not just reflect it.

Stocks have fallen four weeks in a row. Some on Wall Street worry that the resulting blow to confidence, not to mention Americans' retirement account statements, has set off a spiral of fear that could push prices even lower, cause people and businesses to pull back and tip the economy into a new recession.

"I'm nervous that fear will lead companies to stop hiring and people to stop spending," says Jim Paulsen, chief investment strategist of Wells Capital Management, famous for his usually bullish take on the markets.

A home sales report this past week showed that more sales than usual fell apart at the last minute, which suggests plunging stocks and dismal economic news gave buyers cold feet. At least 16 percent of deals were canceled ahead of closings last month, four times the rate in May.

Beth Ann Bovino, senior economist at Standard & Poor's, says that another big plunge in stocks could "push us closer to the brink." The Standard & Poor's 500 stock index ended Friday at 1,123.53, down 5 percent for the week. The average is down 16 percent during the four-week losing streak. One reason for the drop is fear that another recession, if not certain, is more likely now.

The run of bad economic news started last month

when the government said the economy grew much more weakly in the first half of this year than thought. Growth, at an annual rate of 0.8 percent, was the slowest since the Great Recession ended in June 2009. The economic weakness has made investors more likely to sell stocks at the first hint that things are getting worse. And last week, they got signs aplenty.

A regional survey by the Federal Reserve said manufacturing had slowed in the mid-Atlantic states by the most in more than two years. Existing home sales fell in July for the third time in four months. Another report showed that exports from Japan, the world's third-biggest economy, had slumped for the fifth straight month. Japan is still reeling from the effects of an earthquake and tsunami in March.

The housing market, which usually helps lead an economic recovery, keeps getting worse. The plunging stock market and scary economic news won't make it any better.

"What you're seeing with the economy, on the job front — it's scaring a lot of people," says Brian Fine, a loan manager at Mortgage Master in Rockville, Maryland.

He says the housing market will languish until buyers and sellers feel more secure about the economy.

"People are really motivated by larger economic trends. It's all about if you feel confident enough to buy a home right now," he says.

The news from Europe got worse, too. Its economy



In this Aug. 19, 2011 file photo, specialist Michael O'Connor works at his post on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange.

has slowed considerably — even in Germany, which has been its greatest source of strength.

Fear spread that European banks, already ailing because they hold bonds of countries that are struggling with debt, were having trouble getting short-term loans to pay for day-to-day activities.

Some Wall Street analysts say reports of trouble were exaggerated, but that didn't seem to matter. For investors, the prospect of banks scrambling for cash dredged up bad memories of the global credit freeze that hit in the fall of 2008 — and they sold stocks.

"A negative feedback loop ... appears to be in the making," two economists at Morgan Stanley wrote Thursday in a widely cited report that itself seemed to beget more fear and sell-

ing. It warned that the U.S. was "dangerously close" to recession.

Stock investors aren't the only ones worried. Martin Fridson, global chief credit strategist at BNP Paribas Investment Partners, notes that investors in bonds issued by the riskiest U.S. companies are dumping them, too.

These investors fear that in a recession companies might not be able to pay interest on these so-called junk bonds.

The selling has forced up the average interest rate on the bonds to 8.3 percent. If investors had faith in the economy, the rate would be 4.6 percent, Fridson says.

"I'm nervous," says Fridson, who has followed the junk bond market since 1984. "I think there's a very material risk of falling into recession."

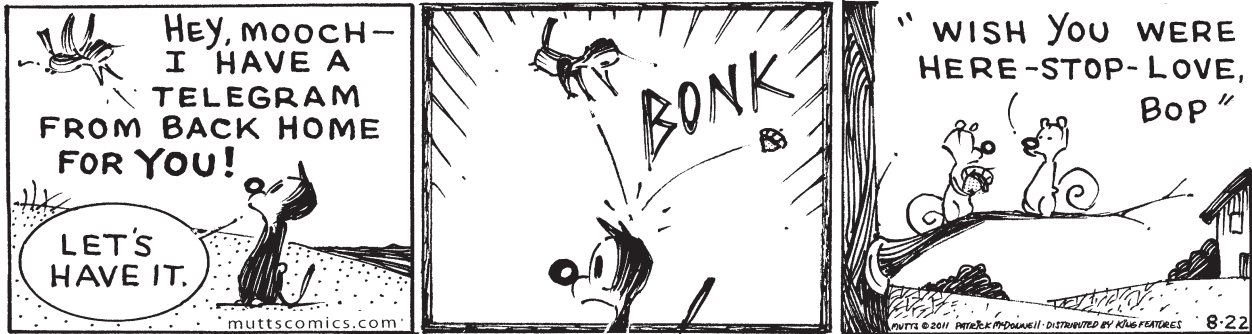
Associated Press

Investors are responding to the risk by putting their money where they feel safe. Demand for the 10-year U.S. Treasury note was so high last week that the yield dipped below 2 percent for the first time in half a century.

And the price of gold has set one record after another. It topped \$1,800 an ounce last week.

Although unemployment remains stubbornly high, at 9.1 percent, there are signs that the economy, while not strong, is still growing. Retail sales grew in July at the fastest pace since March. Employers added 117,000 jobs last month — a modest gain, but far better than the hundreds of thousands of jobs lost each month during the Great Recession. Factory production rose in July because automakers made more cars. □

Mutts



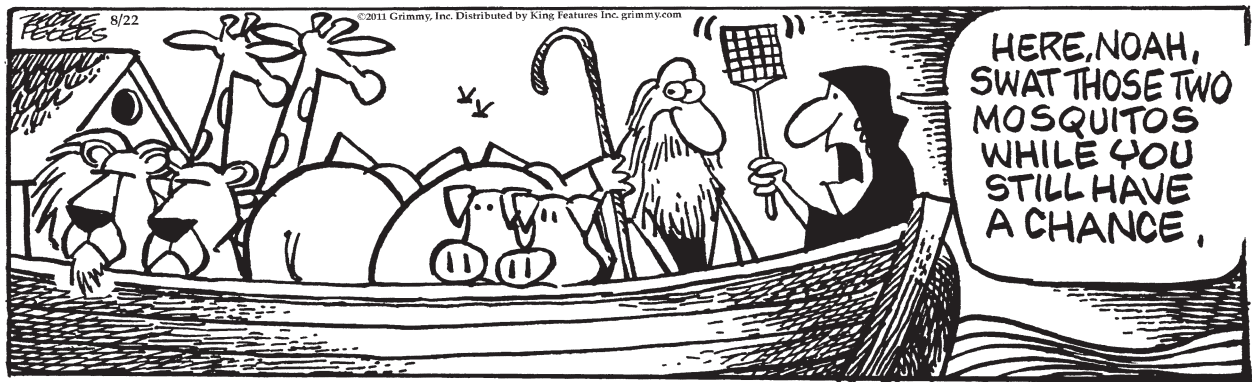
6 Chix



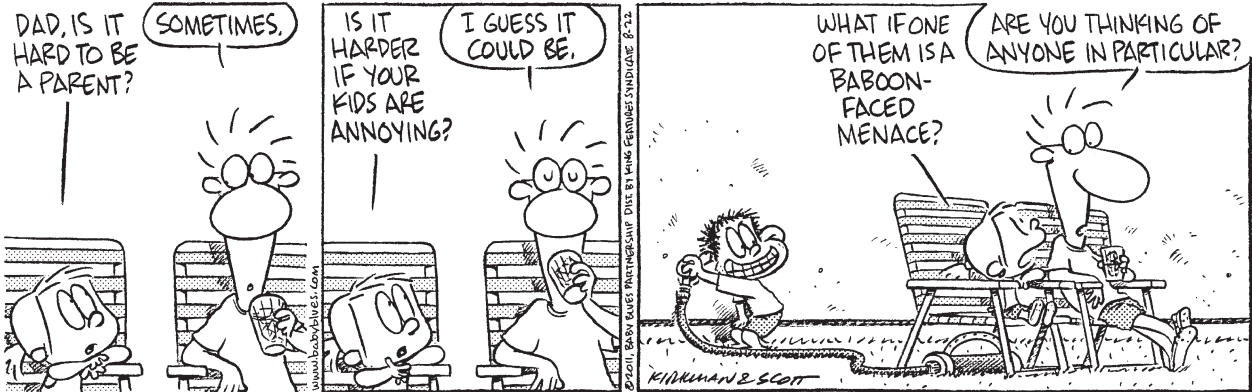
Blondie



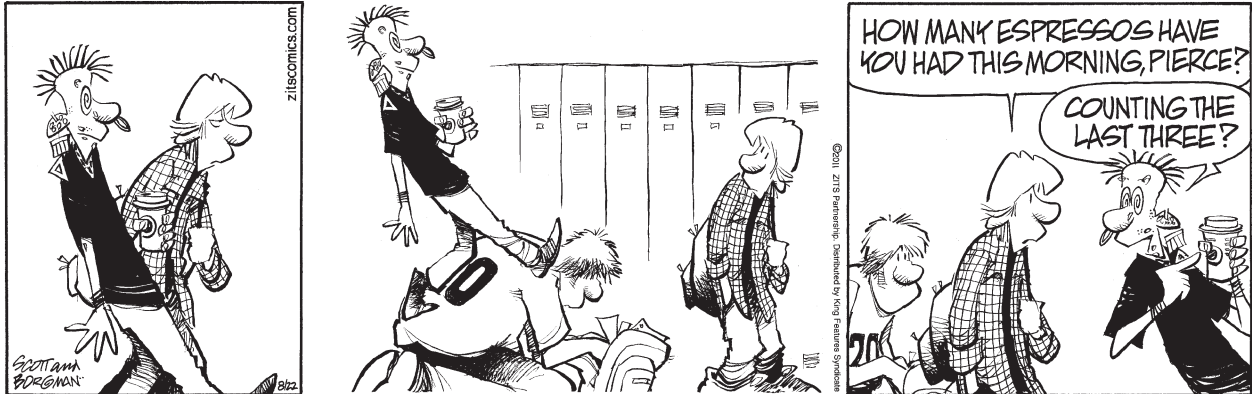
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

	4			9	7	6	
8				4		5	
			1	5	6		3
6	1				4		9
	9			2		1	
4		3			2		8
5			7	1	4		
	6			3			7
	1	7	9			2	

Difficulty Level ★

8/22

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Saturday's puzzle answer

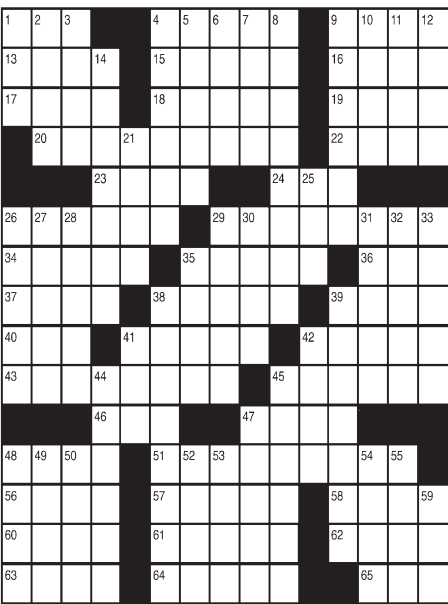
2	3	7	8	4	6	1	5	9
8	4	9	1	7	5	3	6	2
1	5	6	9	2	3	8	4	7
6	8	5	3	1	9	7	2	4
4	1	2	6	5	7	9	3	8
7	9	3	2	8	4	6	1	5
5	7	1	4	6	8	2	9	3
9	6	8	5	3	2	4	7	1
3	2	4	7	9	1	5	8	6

ACROSS

- Zodiac lion
- Years; longs
- Flip-; reverse one's position
- Upper limbs
- "Trick or _!"
- Helper
- Cheese with a whitish rind
- Kid around with
- Cots and cribs
- Oscar or Emmy
- Fall leaf color
- Didn't float
- Hawaiian taro root food
- Enjoy a drink
- Puncturing
- Is the front-runner
- Minister's home
- Greek "T"
- In _ of; as a substitute for
- Likelihood
- Nuisance
- Coastal area
- Keep _ on; follow closely
- Crude mineral
- Homer classic
- Unkempt
- Halts & refuses to proceed
- Zahn or Abdul
- Hotels
- Articles
- Belly button
- Pretext; appearance
- African nation
- 1040 submitter
- _ out at; attacking verbally
- Skirt's edge

DOWN

- Blood analysis site
- Goofs
- Leave out
- Bring into harmony
- Stream



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

8/22/11

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

T	A	S	T	E	E	S	P	Y	S	H	U	N
O	C	E	A	N	L	U	R	E	H	O	L	E
U	N	C	U	T	A	D	O	S	O	R	C	A
R	E	T	R	E	A	T	S	M	U	R	D	E
			U	R	G	E		B	A	N	T	E
C	H	I	S	E	L		P	A	N	D	A	
R	O	T		D	O	P	E	S		O	G	D
A	B	E	D		W	A	C	K	Y		E	U
G	O	M	E	R		V	A	S	E	S		E
			S	I	R	E	N		M	U	T	T
S	C	E	P	T	E	R		G	E	N	E	
M	A	N	I	A	C		V	E	N	D	E	T
A	N	T	S		E	P	I	C		O	T	H
C	O	R	E		S	O	A	K		W	H	I
K	E	Y	S		S	I	L	O		N	E	S

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8/22/11

42 Fair; deserved

44 Legally responsible

45 Shiny stuff on a Christmas tree

47 Thickheaded

48 Sick _; too ill to be up

49 Volcanic output

50 Stern; gloomy

52 Unusual

53 Snatch

54 Lunchtime

55 Ballerina _ Pavlova

59 Has _ on one's face; is humiliated

Today In History

The Associated Press

Today is Monday, August 22, the 234th day of 2011. There are 131 days left in the year. Highlights in history on this date:

1485 - England's King Richard III is killed fighting against overwhelming odds at the Battle of Bosworth, ending War of the Roses.

1567 - Spanish Duke of Alba establishes "Council of Blood" and begins reign of terror as military governor in the Netherlands.

1941 - Nazi troops reach outskirts of Soviet city of Leningrad in World War II.

1945 - Iranian army kills seven rebellious officers and men who were planning to lead an attack on the Russian-garrisoned city of Meshed.

1952 - The United States announces it would pay South Korea another \$35 million installment to help defray the cost of maintaining U.S. troops in Korea.

1972 - Rhodesia is asked to withdraw from 20th Olympic Summer Games because of its racial policies.

1981 - A Taiwanese domestic jetliner explodes in mid air and bursts into flames, killing all 110 people on



Today is Tori Amos's birthday board.

1996 - Monsoon rains and a snowstorm sweep across the Himalayas during a Hindu pilgrimage to a mountain temple, killing more than 200. Tens of thousands are

Today's Birthdays:

Claude Debussy, French composer (1862-1918); Dorothy Parker, U.S. writer/poet (1893-1967); Leni Riefenstahl, German filmmaker (1902-2003); Deng Xiaoping, Chinese leader (1904-1997); Henri Cartier-Bresson, French photographer (1908-2004); Arthur Sackler, U.S. physician (1913-1987); Karlheinz Stockhausen, German composer (1928-2007); Ray Bradbury, author (1920--); Tori Amos, U.S. singer (1963--).

Thought For Today:

Men make counterfeit money; in many more cases, money makes counterfeit men. — Sydney J. Harris, American journalist (1917-1986). □

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Utah researcher helps artist make bulletproof skin

By LYNN DeBRUIN
Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — A bio-art project to create bulletproof skin has given a Utah State researcher even more hope his genetically engineered spider silk can be used to help surgeons heal large wounds and create artificial tendons and ligaments.

Researcher Randy Lewis and his collaborators gained worldwide attention recently when they found a commercially viable way to manufacture silk fibers using goats and silkworms that had spider genes inserted into their makeup.

Spider silk is one of the strongest fibers known and five times stronger than steel. Lewis' fibers are not that strong but much stronger than silk spun by ordinary worms.

With Lewis' help, Dutch artist Jalila Essaidi conducted

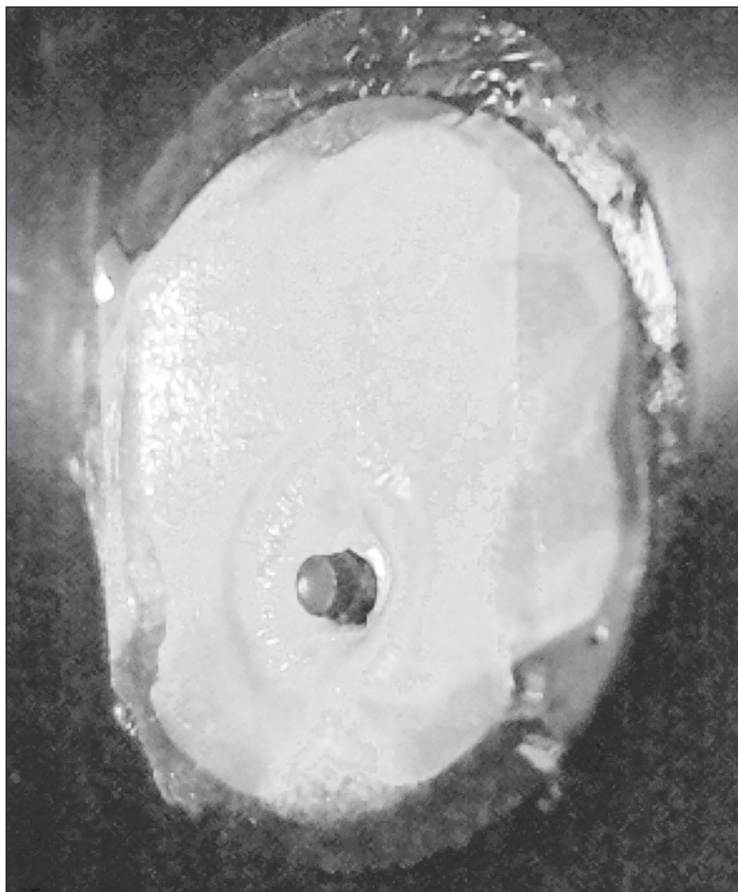


an experiment weaving a lattice of human skin cells and silk that was capable of stopping bullets fired at reduced speeds.

"Randy and I were moved by the same drive I think, curiosity about the outcome of the project," Essaidi said in an email interview. "Both the artist and scientist are inherently curious beings."

Lewis thought the project was a bit off the wall at first, Essaidi acknowledged.

"But in the end, what curious person can say no to a project like this?" she said. Essaidi, who used a European genetics-in-art grant to fund her project at the Designers & Artists 4 Genomics



This undated high-speed camera image, above, shows a .22 caliber bullet hitting but not breaking the “bulletproof” skin, and Dutch artist Jalila Essaidi, left, pointing a gun. Utah State research Randy Lewis and Essaidi have constructed a “bulletproof skin” with Lewis supplying the silk threads from a genetically engineered silk worm that Essaidi weaved into a lattice of human skin cells to create a layer that was capable of repelling a bullet.

Associated Press

fired at a reduced speed piercing the skin woven with an ordinary worm's silk. But when tested with Lewis' genetically engineered worm's silk grafted between the epidermis and dermis, the skin didn't break. Neither was able to repel a bullet fired at normal speed from a .22 caliber rifle.

"We were more than a little surprised that the final skin kept the bullet from going in there," Lewis said of the tests at reduced speed. "It still ended up 2 inches into the torso, so it would not have saved your life. But without a doubt the most exciting part for us is the fact that they were able to recreate the skin on top of our fibers. It's something we haven't done. Nobody has worked in that area."

Essaidi was intrigued by the concept of spider silk as armor, and wanted to show that safety in its broadest sense is a relative concept, hence bulletproof.

"If human skin would be able to produce this thread, would we be protected from bullets?" she wondered on her blog. "I want to explore the social, political, ethical and cultural issues surrounding safety in a world with access to new biotechnologies." She said it is legend that Achilles was invulnerable in all of his body except for his heel.

"Will we in the near future due to biotechnology no longer need to descend from a godly bloodline in order to have traits like invulnerability?" she asked.

Lewis downplayed the potential bulletproof applications of his research.

"I certainly would not discount that, but I don't see that as a tremendous application at the moment," he said. □



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Canadian based Somali rapper K'naan, centre, visits Mogadishu's Banadir hospital, Somalia Sunday, Aug. 21, 2011. The singer who was mobbed by famine refugees trying to shake his hand or get a hug, said his mission is fact finding on how to help the people of Somalia and promised to do all that he can to assist them.

(AP Photo/Farah Abdi Warsameh)

Somali rapper K'naan visits famine-struck homeland

ABDI GULED
Associated Press

MOGADISHU, Somalia
(AP) — Somali-born rapper

K'naan brought his waving flag back home Sunday, promising to help his countrymen as they struggle with a devastating famine that has killed tens of thousands of children.

The rapper, who left Somalia as a child more than two decades ago to settle in Canada, made a brief visit to Mogadishu on Sunday. He was mobbed by famine refugees who tried to shake his hand or hug him as he toured Mogadishu's Banadir Hospital and met with malnourished children.

"I came to Somalia to see the situation here and give any donation I have to the people and anything else

available," he said, speaking in Somali. "I will do all I can to help my people in Somalia."

He did not perform his hit song "Wavin' Flag," which tells of the difficulties he faced growing up in the lawless, impoverished Horn of Africa nation. A version of that song was used for a Coca-Cola campaign when South Africa hosted the 2010 World Cup. The United Nations says more than 3.2 million Somalis need food aid.

The U.S. says 29,000 Somali children under age 5 have died.

The U.N. says tens of thousands of people already have died in Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti and has warned that the famine hasn't peaked. □

"Machine Gun" Kelly arrested for flash mob

STRONGSVILLE, Ohio (AP) — Authorities say rapper Machine Gun Kelly organized a flash mob at a suburban Cleveland mall and was charged with disorderly conduct. Strongsville police say the group gathered Saturday, and mall management asked three people standing on a table near a second-floor railing to step down. Kelly was among the three. When they refused, police were called. Police say they're no longer in custody. Kelly tweeted later that "today was a statement."

Sean "P. Diddy" Combs told MTV this month that he signed Kelly, an Ohio native, to his Bad Boy Records label.

"Machine Gun" was the nickname of George Kelly, a Prohibition-era gangster in the 1920s and 30s.

The Plain Dealer reports that Cleveland's mayor recently vetoed an ordinance that would have criminalized some uses of social media and was aimed at curbing flash mobs. □

'Help' cleans up with \$20.5M, No. 1 weekend

DAVID GERMAIN

AP Movie Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "The Help" continues to clean up at the box office, taking over the No. 1 spot with \$20.5 million in its second weekend.

The DreamWorks Pictures film starring Viola Davis, Emma Stone and Octavia Spencer in a drama about Southern black maids had debuted in second-place a week earlier. "The Help" raised its domestic total to \$71.8 million and bumped 20th Century Fox's "Rise of the Planet of the Apes," which slipped to No. 2 with \$16.3 million after two weekends at the top, according to studio estimates Sunday.

"Rise of the Planet of the Apes" remains a solid hit, lifting its domestic total to \$133.8 million.

Much as Kathryn Stockett's novel "The Help" became a best-seller through readers talking it up, the film is holding strong as audiences tell friends to go see it, said Dave Hollis, head of distribution for Disney, which releases DreamWorks films.

While revenues often drop 50 percent or more in the second weekend for big studio films, receipts for "The Help" were down only 21 percent from opening weekend.

"It is a rare feat to see a film not open at No. 1 and then become No. 1," Hollis said. "To me, it's a testament of it being a great film, as well as the viral nature of the word of mouth about it."

A rush of new movies had weak openings: the Weinstein Co. family sequel "Spy Kids: All the Time in the World" at No. 3 with \$12 million; Lionsgate's action remake "Conan the Barbarian" at No. 4 with \$10 million; the DreamWorks-Disney horror-comedy remake "Fright Night" at No. 5 with \$8.3 million; and Focus Features' literary adaptation "One Day" at No. 9 with \$5.1 million.

Overall domestic revenues slid for the first time in five

weekends. Receipts totaled \$124 million, down 3 percent from the same weekend last year, when "The Expendables" led with \$17 million, according to box-office tracker Hollywood.com.

Other than "Fright Night," the new movies were panned by critics, and audiences were apathetic about all of the newcomers.

"This is the reason the term dog days of August was invented," said Hollywood.

in at barely a third of the \$33.4 million debut for the last "Spy Kids" flick in 2003.

"Conan the Barbarian" stars Jason Momoa as the fierce warrior played by Arnold Schwarzenegger in the 1980s original. "Fright Night" features Colin Farrell as a vampire going after a neighbor (Anton Yelchin) who discovers he's a blood-sucker. Based on David Nicholls' best-seller, "One Day" casts Anne Hathaway and Jim Sturgess as friends in a decades-long



Cast member Emma Stone of "The Help" in Beverly Hills, Calif. "The Help" continues to clean up at the box office, taking over the No. 1 spot with \$20.5 million in its second weekend.

(AP Photo/Matt Sayles)

com analyst Paul Dergarabedian. "Other than 'The Help' and to some extent 'Rise of the Planet of the Apes,' everybody else got beat up this weekend. This was one of those really slow, turn-movie-theaters-into-a-ghost-town weekends."

Three of the new movies — "Spy Kids," "Conan the Barbarian" and "Fright Night" — had the benefit of higher-priced 3-D screenings, but none were able to capitalize.

Robert Rodriguez's fourth "Spy Kids," featuring Jessica Alba as an agent whose step-kids get in on the espionage action, also added odor to the picture with scratch-and-sniff cards handed out to viewers so they could smell what the characters were smelling.

The gimmick failed to pack in crowds, though, with the sequel's revenues coming

romantic dance that plays out on the same day each year.

With solid reviews, Disney executives thought "Fright Night" would offer a good mix of scares and laughs for fans in their late teens and early 20s. But distribution boss Hollis said "Fright Night" fell victim to an issue that has troubled studios all summer: How do you bring out younger crowds when they have so many personal entertainment options, from video games to downloading movies?

"What happened here has been a problem for the industry for a long time, and that's just how do you crack the nut with young adults?" Hollis said. "They've been increasingly finicky."

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Hollywood.com. □

For some reality stars, turmoil follows fame

A. McCARTNEY

AP Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Reality came crashing in on Russell Armstrong. With the second season of "The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills" set to premiere on the Bravo cable television channel in a few weeks, and a pending lawsuit and divorce, the venture capitalist-turned reality personality hanged himself.

Armstrong left behind no note explaining why, leaving others to indict and defend a genre that has seen its share of off-screen turmoil that often dwarfs the drama caught on camera. The headlines include a murder, drug trafficking, overdoses, financial ruin, and custody disputes and divorces that play out in the tabloids as much as they do in courtrooms. Experts caution reality TV is not solely to blame, but the full impact on its participants and audience is not yet known.

At least temporarily, Armstrong's suicide has shaken one of the genre's brashest franchises.

Bravo, which airs "The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills," is re-editing the show's second season, which had planned to focus on the

marital strife between Armstrong and his wife, Taylor. The network did not say how it would alter the unaired episodes, or whether it would incorporate any mentions of suicide prevention resources.

Beyond "Housewives," few people, including Russell Armstrong's own attorney, expect the suicide to have broad implications for the



Ryan Alexander Jenkins, of Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Jenkins, who was on the VH1 reality series, "Megan Wants a Millionaire," was found dead of an apparent suicide. Experts caution reality TV is not to blame, but the full impact on its participants and the sizable audience is not yet known. (AP Photo)

reality show industry.

"I don't think it'll make any difference at all," attorney Ronald Richards said in an interview. He said he hoped

the show would remove Armstrong from its storyline altogether, but said his client had been warned of the pitfalls of appearing in a reality series before signing on.

"Housewives" has since its debut in 2006 thrived on the divorces, foreclosures and tempers of its well-heeled cast members' lives. The Washington, D.C., version starred a couple accused of crashing a state dinner at the White House, and the first season of the New Jersey version ended with one housewife angrily calling a fellow cast member a "whore" and overturning a table while the woman's children looked on.

Stars of current hit shows such as "Jersey Shore" have reveled in bad behavior, while even those that aim to help have been rocked by off-screen tragedy.

Two alumni of "Celebrity Rehab" — actor Jeff Conaway and former Alice In Chains bassist Mike Starr have died after their seasons aired.

Richard Hatch, the winner of the first season of the U.S. version of "Survivor," has waged a years-long battle over unpaid taxes and is currently in prison. □



Reality TV personality Kim Kardashian, right, and NBA basketball player Kris Humphries, arrive at the Kardashian Kollection launch party in Los Angeles. Kardashian and Humphries wed on Saturday, Aug. 20, 2011 in Montecito, Calif.

(AP Photo/Matt Sayles, file)

Kim Kardashian in made-for-TV wedding

SANTA BARBARA, California (AP) — Kris Humphries has officially caught up with Kim Kardashian. The basketball pro and the reality star are husband and wife.

Kardashian, 30, and Humphries, 26, tied the knot Saturday night in the exclusive Montecito area near Santa Barbara, California, Kardashian publicist Jill Fritzo told People magazine and E!

The ceremony will be televised as a two-part special on E! in October.

It is the first marriage for Humphries, who last played for the NBA's New Jersey Nets, and the second for Kardashian, star of E!'s "Keeping Up with the Kardashians." She was married to music producer Damon Thomas from 2000 to 2004. People and E! reported Kardashian wore an ivory gown designed by Vera Wang. Her stepfather, Bruce Jenner, walked her down the aisle in front of 440 guests, including Demi Lovato, Mario Lopez, Eva Longoria, Sugar Ray Leonard, Alan Thicke and Lindsay Lohan.

Kardashian's gown had a tulle skirt, basque waist and Chantilly lace, and was matched with a pair of Giuseppe Zanotti shoes, the media outlets reported. The bride planned to wear two other Wang dresses before the night and the party were over.

Her sisters and TV co-stars Kourtney Kardashian, 32, and Khloe Kardashian, 27, served as co-maids of honor.

The groom wore a white peak lapel tuxedo jacket, black tuxedo pants and, a white shirt and a white bow tie, all designed by Ermenegildo Zegna.

Kardashian and Humphries began dating late last year and announced their engagement in May. He proposed on bended knee with a 20.5-carat ring by spelling out "Will you marry me?" in rose petals. □



Models, from left to right, Kikka, Rei Hamada, Ayaka Hanawa and Yukari Kuzuya pose during a show at the Tokyo Fashion Fuse event in Tokyo Saturday Aug. 20, 2011. The event is a merger of music and fashion featuring top models and international DJs.

(AP Photo/Greg Baker)

9/11's white elephant



JOE NOCERA

© 2011 New York Times

There is nothing wrong – and much that is right – with building a national monument to memorialize the nearly 3,000 people killed in the 9/11 attacks a decade ago. The awful events of that day traumatized the country – and changed it. The dead deserve to be remembered. Far be it from me to suggest otherwise. What I do want to suggest, though, is that what's being built in the name of 9/11 – a staggering \$11 billion worth of government-sponsored construction on the 16 acres we now call ground zero – is an example of just about everything wrong with modern government. When the World Trade Center site is finally completed, it will include a state-of-the-art train station whose cost overruns have surpassed \$1 billion. The 9/11 memorial itself, which covers the footprint of the former twin towers, was so far behind schedule that it is now being hastily constructed, out of sequence, so that it will be ready by the 10th anniversary of the tragedy.

And then there's 1 World Trade Center, scheduled to be completed in 2013, which will add 2.6 million square feet of office space in a city that doesn't need it, at a cost so high that it will be a cash drain for decades to come. Where's the Tea Party when you need them? Last year, I wrote about 1 World Trade Center, pointing out that its \$3.3 billion price tag made it, by far, the most expensive office building ever constructed in America. At the time, Richard Gladstone, the project manager for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which is in charge of rebuilding ground zero, told me point-blank that despite its costs, the new skyscraper would not affect the commuters who pay the tolls to cross the six bridges and tunnels the agency operates.

But, on Friday, that statement was shown to be – how to put this nicely? – untrue. The Port Authority, with the complicity of Andrew Cuomo and Chris Christie, the governors of New York and New Jersey, who oversee the agency, approved a series of toll increases so onerous that by 2015, a typical commuter who uses the George Washington Bridge will have to pay \$62.50 a week to get to work.

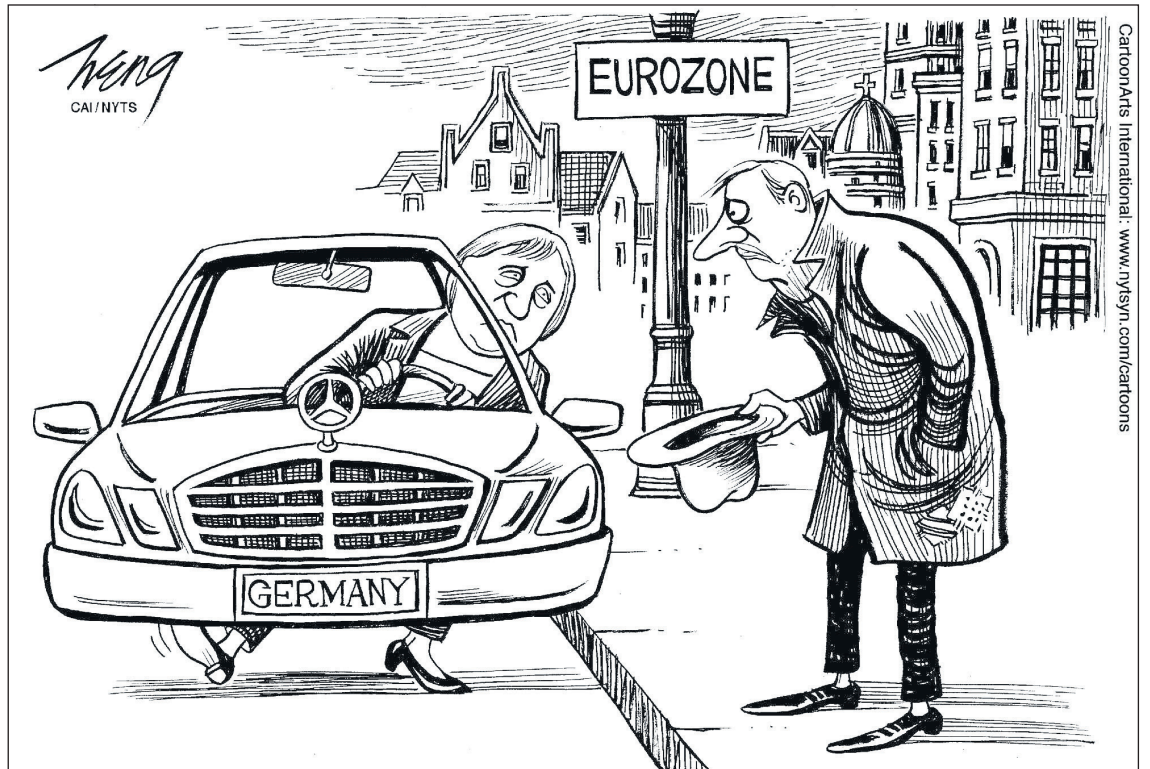
What has been especially galling has been the cynicism surrounding the efforts to get the toll increases. First, the Port Authority said that unless it could increase the tolls, it would have to "slow or stop" the construction of 1 World Trade Center. Though this scenario was highly unlikely, it got the construction unions duly aroused, as it was intended to do. They began calling in favors among the politicians.

The Port Authority was originally going to propose two increases of \$2, spaced a few years apart. But the politicians in both Cuomo's and Christie's offices suggested that the agency come forth with a much higher initial toll increase – thus allowing the two governors to look like heroes when they "persuaded" the Port Authority to lower the increases. The governors also railed on about waste and fraud at the Port Authority, while knowing full well the real problem was the fact that \$3.3 billion – money that could have been spent on needed infrastructure improvements – was instead diverted to a white elephant at ground zero.

I understand that it's hard, even for a blunt-talking fiscal conservative like Christie, to openly criticize 1 World Trade Center. For many people, its rebuilding has enormous symbolic importance. George Pataki, the former New York governor, who pushed hardest for the rebuilding, originally named the building Freedom Tower. Recent editorials in the New York tabloids objecting to the toll increases nevertheless tiptoed gingerly around the outrageous costs of 1 World Trade Center.

But despite the shroud of patriotism that its supporters have always cloaked it in, it's really just a big, fancy office building. An office building with such poor economics that it will soak New Jersey and New York commuters for decades to come. An office building only the government could love. Lately, supporters of the project have begun saying that its economics have improved. They point to the fact that Conde Nast, the publishing giant, has agreed to be the anchor tenant. What they fail to point out is that Conde Nast's rent is less than half the break-even cost of the 1 million square feet it will occupy. In other words, a company that publishes high-end magazines aimed at rich people will be getting an enormous government subsidy for the foreseeable future.

And who will be paying for that subsidy? The mailroom attendants who use the Lincoln Tunnel to get to work. The middle-class New Jerseyites who use the George Washington Bridge. The firefighters and police officers who live in Staten Island. Thus does, in the name of 9/11, New York and New Jersey place another economic burden on the already overburdened middle class. How sad. □



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Of dystopias and alphas



MAUREEN DOWD

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WASHINGTON – President Barack Obama was on the way to Alpha when a plea came for him to be, well, more alpha. LuAnn Lavine, a real estate agent from Geneseo, a rural town just up the road from Alpha, Ill., the last stop on the president's Midwestern bus tour, told The New York Times' Jeff Zeleny: "Everyone was so hopeful with him, but Washington grabbed him and here we are. I just want him to stay strong and don't take the guff. We want a president who is a leader, and I want him to be a little bit stronger." Hers was a gentler message than the sign stuck on a post outside Alpha: "One Term President." ut her three words summed it up: Washington grabbed him. Why did this man whose contempt for Congress is clear, who ran on the idea that he could transform a broken Washington, surrender to its conventional timetable and bureaucratic language? The "supercommittee" that's supposed to save us just sounds like more government bloat – supersizing something just as unhealthy as McDonald's. Is Obama so isolated he can't see that Americans are curled up in a ball, beaten down by a financial crisis, an identity crisis, a political crisis and a leadership crisis?

He got the job by blaming Washington. But once you're in the

White House, you are Washington. It's like the plumber who came to fix the sink waiting for the sink to fix itself. I covered the first President Bush when he took a slide from Iraq war hero to one-term president. A turning point came in the fall of 1991, when Americans were getting jittery about the economy. Conservatives urged Bush to adopt an aggressive agenda and a muscular stance toward Congress. But relying on the disastrous advice of his budget adviser Richard Darman, Bush waited for more than a month until the State of the Union address and repackaged the same tepid agenda.

Obama bashed Congress on his bus tour. But after delegating to Congress time and again with disastrous results, he continues to play the satellite to Congress. He shouldn't be driven by the Washington schedule. He should be setting it. At long last, he promised a clear economic plan. Unfortunately, he had the fierce urgency of next month, when Congress gets back to town. Americans are rattled and want action. They don't know or care what Congress' schedule is. They just see the president not doing anything. Cruising white Midwestern hamlets in his black bus, Obama tried to justify not calling lawmakers back to D.C. by saying they'd just continue to bicker. But what does he think they'll do in September? The truth is, he doesn't want them back in the capital any more than they want to be back. It would have screwed up his vacation and upset Michelle, who already feels trapped in the Washington bubble. If Clinton wanted to be president 25 hours a day and W. wanted to be president four hours a day, Obama wants to be president for about 14 hours a day. And that's fine, as long as you don't look like you're phoning it in when the country is dialing 911.

White House officials must be wor-

ried about the 10-day Martha's Vineyard idyll because, in a rare move, they put out a picture of the president with furrowed brow and Nike shirt getting a briefing from John Brennan, his top counterterrorism adviser. There were no pictures allowed of him at the Vineyard Golf Club, only shots of the president shopping for books with his daughters. He was seen in the Bunch of Grapes bookstore on Friday holding "Brave New World." Maybe he was brushing up on dystopias and alphas. He might also want to pick up a volume of Robert Frost for some insight on why Democrats waste time trying to reconcile with ruthless foes. The president still believes he can use his enchanting powers to convert the other side, even though Republicans regard every Obama legislative achievement as the beginning of a campaign to recall it. Heck, they're still trying to repeal the New Deal. Obama was truly stung by his budget experience with John Boehner. And now, Sen. Tom Coburn, whom Obama called "not only a dear friend, but also a brother in Christ" at February's National Prayer Breakfast, tells a town hall in Oklahoma that Obama's views are "goofy and wrong," and that the president wants to "create dependency" because "as an African-American male," he had received "tremendous benefit" from government programs. There is no way to sell the idea that being a black man in America gives you tremendous benefit. How does Obama feel after his brother in Christ painted him as something akin to a welfare queen and an affirmative-action president? Let us take today's lesson from Frost, who deliciously wrote in "The Lesson for Today": I'm liberal. You, you aristocrat, won't know exactly what I mean by that. I mean so altruistically moral I never take my own side in a quarrel. □

In New York, the night is young

CAITLIN KEATING
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"Where is the school bus to pick up all of these kids?" a 27-year-old man was wondering aloud around 11:30 p.m., in a parking lot outside the nightclub SL East in East Hampton, N.Y. It was a

digits. Matthew said he had been a DJ a few times, and Ryan said he used to promote at Nello Summertime in Southampton on Saturday nights, but that the party there ended earlier than it was supposed to, after a New York Post article high-

or whatever group of guys that are their buddies that they want to say they have some access that someone else doesn't." Remm said that on a typical weekend night his clubs will hire three or four official hosts. "Those hosts have

gains admission to his clubs, Remm passed the buck to his doormen. "We're willing to lose out on a few dollars in order to justify and maintain the brand," he said, adding a crowd of young people clamoring to get in can be good for business, even if they aren't allowed. "It doesn't hurt us. It only creates a better energy at the front door, which allows us to be more selective as to who we invite." At SL East, at least, his safety net appeared to be working. A group of six girls had tried to sneak in through the back exit of SL East, walking with as much confidence as they could with their heels getting stuck in the gravel. "We need security back here!" a guard shouted. SL East also sporadically employs Jake Truen, 21, who said he has promoted since he was in high school at Half Hollow Hills in Dix Hills, N.Y. In a telephone interview, Truen said his youth posed a distinctive advantage in the field. "The kids are the ones spending the money to get into these

who is the DJ, at a club on a particular night. "I've made a lot of connections," Truen said, "so if Avicii is at South Pointe, I will call the owner of the club directly, tell him I'm coming, who I'm bringing, how much money will be spent, and that I want 10 percent of what my clients spend." (Jonathan Schwartz, an owner of South Pointe, which is in Southampton, said: "We don't have any promoters who are 21. The youngest promoter we have on payroll is 26 years old.") Truen said he can make \$1,500 on a typical Saturday night. (Remm expressed incredulity at this. "There is no person that works for me who makes \$1,500 a night," he said. "If they did I could quit my job and do that.") Before Truen's clients head to the club, he said, they email requests for a table. Then he simply forwards the messages to staff members at SL East, and the customers are put into the reservation system as Truen's "cli-



Guests at SL East club, where Ryan Skolnick, 23, works as a promoter, in East Hampton, N.Y. In the Hamptons, much of the summer party scene is ruled by club promoters who themselves are barely old enough to drink, and draw in young people who are often under-age clubgoers.

(Michael Nagle/The New York Times)

hot Saturday night in July, and around him girls who appeared to be about 18 were huddled together, illuminated by a chandelier and the sickly hue of their smartphones.

Behind a velvet rope was Ryan Skolnick, 23, a DJ and promoter: texting, phoning, urging a new wave of fresh-faced arrivals toward the club. "I saw that there was no one taking care of my age demographic in the Hamptons," said the scruffy-cheeked, tanned Skolnick, a University of Miami student, explaining his decision to work at the club, sometimes with help from his fraternal twin, Matthew, also a DJ (he is mainly a producer), who goes by the last name Sterling.

The club scene in the Hamptons has always attracted the young, but this summer the crowd has seemed downright larval — thanks in part to a new breed of promoter, like the brothers, that is barely of drinking age, but has Facebook contacts in the four

lighting underage drinking and drug use led to a police investigation. Now the brothers have moved operations to SL East, though they are vague about their commitment there.

"I do bring a good amount of people every Saturday, but I just do it to help out and have a good time," Matthew said.

Much like the term "producer" in Hollywood, the job of promoter is veiled in a certain ambiguity. "A lot of people claim to be promoters, but they're really just hanging out with the promoter and want to sound like they're cool, like, 'Yeah, yeah, I work there, I work there,'" said Eugene Remm, an owner of EMM Group, a hospitality, lifestyle and management company that also oversees SL East as well as Tenjune, a popular place in Manhattan. "It's part of the game with people. They're not necessarily promoters there; they just want to be able to get access to whatever pretty girl that they want to invite out



Brothers Matthew and Ryan Skolnick, right, at the SL East club where Ryan works as a promoter, in East Hampton, N.Y.

(Michael Nagle/The New York Times)

the ability to hire subpromoters," he said, a category also known as "subs." "I don't necessarily know who they hire, or if they're necessarily paying them. Maybe paid in a couple free drinks and be able to feel like they're part of the team."

Asked how he decides who

clubs," he said. Truen said he "hates" promoting (the term has a negative connotation, he said) but does it because he enjoys going to parties. And the process is relatively simple: He sends a mass text message from his BlackBerry telling his 450-person list of acquaintances where to go, and

ents," enabling his commission to be calculated. Though he works for several different venues, Truen said he considered SL East to be the best establishment in the Hamptons. "We are responsible for filling one-third of the club with our clients, who are all college students," he said. □